

SPEECHES AND EXTRACTS FROM SPEECHES

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OF THE

HON. JOHN LETCHER,

DEMOCRATIC CANDIDATE FOR GOVERNOR OF VIRGINIA,

TOUCHING

64

THE SUBJECT OF SLAVERY,

DURING HIS

SEVERAL TERMS AS REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF
VIRGINIA.

WASHINGTON:

THOMAS MCGILL, PRINTER.

1859.

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S P E E C H E S.

Speech delivered in the House of Representatives, May 3d, 1854, in connection with the subject of granting lands to settlers in the Territory of Oregon:

Mr. LETCHER. Wait a moment, and you shall have it; my remarks will not be long.

My friend from Ohio [Mr. DISNEY] has one of the happiest faculties of any gentleman within the limits of my acquaintance. I have never yet seen him opposed to anybody that he was not perfectly satisfied that he was in the right, and that nobody else was, or could be, right. [Laughter.] I have observed his course on various occasions, not only in the discussion of land questions, but in other matters in this House, and I have yet to see the very first man who ever differed from him in opinion, no matter how wide or how slight the difference, that he did not come to the conclusion, and with a great deal of self-complacency, that he was right, and that it was utterly impossible it could be otherwise.

Now, the gentleman says that my objection to this section has no sort of point to it. What is the objection? I object to the surrender of the whole of the public lands of the country in these Territories. The gentleman admits that these parties may go in there, and that they may, after taking up these lands, divide them to suit their own convenience. With this authority, it will be hard to tell how much land will be occupied by these parties. Under the doctrine of the veto which went into the Senate to-day, I think that we may possibly hope, ere long, to arrest some of this squandering of the public lands. The President says that they ought not to be given up unless there is a full equivalent in the value given for them; that the Government ought not to lose the price of them; and under this principle I hope that we may be able to check this principle of giving away. And I hope that it will check it for another reason. Look at the state of things now in this country in the organization of Territories. Here are five Territories organized in the North at this time, one organized in 1848, one which is now the subject of consideration; and, in the space of six years, it has grown so rapidly that at this very time there is a bill on the table to organize it as a State. Well, here are other of these Territories growing up under this spirit of liberality on the part of the Federal Government, which gives away lands to settlers, and withdraws them from the old States. We are building up northern power to create a disparity far greater than at present exists between the North and the South.

I have no objection to the organization of these Territories when they are needed, but I have an objection to using the power of this Government for the purpose of stimulating a hot-house system that shall encourage these Territories, and bring them upon us of the South as States when we are weak enough already in this Government. Under the old policy, our custom was to admit into this Union a free State and a slave State at the same time, and that policy was adhered to for a long series of years, until squatter sovereignty and military authority controlled California, and brought her into the Union as a free State, thus destroying the equality.

If men choose to go into these Territories voluntarily and settle there for the purpose of bettering their fortunes, let them go. But do not let this Government undertake to destroy us of the South by holding out stimulants to the encouragement of northern Territories, the propagation of northern sentiment, and the multiplication of northern representatives here and in the Senate. We are the weaker party now in both bodies, and I hope we shall not so legislate as to place us at a greater disadvantage.

Speech in the House of Representatives, February 27, 1855.

The House being in the Committee of the Whole on the state of the Union—

Mr. LETCHER said:

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I have listened with a great deal of attention, and no small degree of surprise, to the speech just delivered by the gentleman from New York, [Mr. GOODWIN.] We are all citizens of the same Government; we all have a common interest in this Union, and it is well enough for us, coming from different sections of the country, to understand the precise position which each is to occupy for the future. The gentleman commenced

his remarks by stating to the committee that he meant to speak candidly and frankly—that he meant to give us of the South notice of the position which the North occupied, that we might understand hereafter the course of events. Now, sir, I desire to know, in order to a correct understanding, whether it is the national sentiment of the North, so far as that gentleman is aware, that, at the next Congress, an attempt is to be made to repeal the fugitive slave law, or to modify that law in such a manner as to annex to it the condition of a jury trial in the place in which the absconding slave may be arrested?

Mr. GOODWIN. I cannot tell what the decision of the whole North would be on that question; but I, for one, speaking for myself, should be very happy, indeed, to see it done.

Mr. LETCHER. As I understood the gentleman from New York, awhile ago, he undertook to speak, not only for himself, but for the Empire State. He undertook to declare what the public sentiment of that State was on the great question in which the South was interested, and in which the existence of the Union itself was concerned.

Mr. GOODWIN. The gentleman did not understand me correctly. In speaking of the sentiment of the North, and the sentiment of the State of New York, I spoke of the decision they had rendered in reference to the repeal of the Missouri compromise, and that there was a great majority there in favor of the restoration of the restriction of the Missouri compromise, excluding slavery from these Territories.

Mr. LETCHER. I will come to that question in due time. Let us get back to the point. I want to ascertain—and it is due to that section of the country from which I come that it should know—whether it is the settled and fixed purpose of the North to undertake to interfere with the fugitive slave law, either by a repeal or by such a modification of its provisions as shall render the law no longer a safe and efficient protection for us in the recovery of our slave property.

So far as that point is concerned, let it pass, as the gentleman finds difficulty in answering my question, and let me come to another point. I desire to know whether it is the settled policy of New York, or whether it is the settled policy of the North, in a future Congress, to attempt to revive the Missouri restriction?

Mr. GOODWIN. I understand that a great majority of the electors of the State of New York are in favor of restoring the slavery restriction to the Territories of Kansas and Nebraska, and are opposed to the introduction of slavery therein.

Mr. LETCHER. That is frank, and I understand exactly what the position of the gentleman is. I understand it to be openly proclaimed that, at the next session of Congress, an attempt is to be made to bring about this result; and I imagine, from the manner in which the gentleman speaks, and from the sentiments which have been uttered by the gentleman from Ohio [Mr. GIDDINGS] to-night, that this is their fixed and settled purpose, and even the sanctity of the Union or the preservation of the Government will not prevent them from making the effort.

I desire to know, upon the third point, what is the settled policy of the State of New York, or the northern portion of this confederacy, in regard to the exclusion of slavery, by congressional prohibition, from the Territories—the common property of the nation. A gentleman suggests here, that this necessarily embraces the point to which I have already referred. I will ask, then, whether it is the settled policy of the North to resort to northern power in this House, for the purpose of excluding, in all time to come, by the exercise of congressional power, slavery from the Territories of Kansas, Nebraska, or any other, which has been acquired by the common blood and common treasure of this country?

Then, upon the fourth point, I desire to know how the Empire State and the North stand. Are they in favor of passing a law here, at a future session of Congress, abolishing slavery in the District of Columbia?

Mr. GOODWIN. I cannot speak, of course, in relation to the action of the North upon this subject.

Mr. LETCHER. Well, of the Empire State, then.

Mr. GOODWIN. I have no doubt that the State of New York would be in favor—I certainly am—of submitting the proposition to the people of this District to determine whether they would abolish slavery therein or not.

Mr. LETCHER. It will be recollectcd by every gentleman who has recurred to the history of past events, that, upon one occasion, a Representative from the State of New York introduced upon this floor a proposition, which was adopted by this House, to abolish slavery in the District of Columbia.

I have now obtained the answers to the questions I proposed, and these answers are pregnant with meaning to the South. It is important to us that we should understand the purposes and objects of the northern people. It is important to us, for the reason that the South should come here at the next session with a spirit of determination prepared to re-

sist any effort of this sort on the part of the North, be the consequences what they may. If this Union cannot be preserved upon terms of equality, and if the territory of this country, acquired by the common blood and common treasure, is not to be open alike to the North and the South, then we desire to be informed of the fact; and whenever the crisis comes, the Union must be dissolved, whatever may be the regret that will attend its dissolution. I, for one, regarded as one of the most conservative men in my own State, and unwilling to believe that there was a settled purpose of this kind anywhere, am yet prepared for the result whenever these issues shall be forced upon us by the people of the North. I shall stand by the rights of the land in which I was born, and in which, I trust, my bones shall repose. I ask nothing here but what I am willing to accord to others; and so long as I have life, or voice, or an arm to raise, they will be raised in defence of the rights, institutions, and honor of the glorious South. The Union has its benefits and blessings. I acknowledge them all; but a Union based upon other principles than those of equality has no charms for me. I come from a State which has maintained her rights in times past, and which will stand by them in all time to come with equal firmness. Whenever an attempt is made to strike down her institutions, and interfere with the rights of her citizens, the North will find that Virginia can and will exhibit a spirit of stern resistance, that she will stand by her rights and institutions to the death.

Mr. HUGHES. If the people of the State of Virginia, or, more particularly, of the district which the gentleman represents so ably upon this floor, felt it to be for their interest, and that the right belonged to them to do it, to ask for the abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia, would the gentleman then vote for such a proposition?

Mr. LETCHER. I hold that we have no right to meddle with it at all; that Congress has no business to pass a law interfering with it; that it is an usurpation of power, which can lead to nothing but mischief.

Let me say another thing to the gentleman from New York. God knows the gentleman went far enough last year with the anti-Nebraska party in this war against the institutions of the South; yet it seems that he did not go far enough for his constituents, and he was thrown, therefore, overboard, and a regular Seward Whig sent here in his place. It seems that the gentleman did not go far enough. Out of the Democrats sent here to this Congress how many are left to tell the tale? Is there a solitary one sent to the next Congress who voted for the Nebraska bill?

Mr. HUGHES. Not one.

Mr. LETCHER. There is the evidence of what is the feeling of the Empire State, to which the gentleman over the way [Mr. GOODWIN] referred, and this is one of the States where they say a great national party has sprung up, that is to preserve the Union, that is to keep off agitation so far as the question of slavery is concerned. Here is the evidence—a solid column of anti-Nebraska men, prepared to vote for a repeal of the fugitive slave law, to resist the introduction of slavery into the Territory of Kansas, even if the people of that Territory wish it; and, if I understand their sentiments, they are ready to vote against the admission of Kansas, if it shall apply for admission into this Union as a *slave* State. Is it not so? What member from the North on this floor will deny that such are the opinions of the people he represents on this floor?

Mr. GIDDINGS. I will express to the committee my gratification at having the privilege of exchanging sentiments with the able gentleman from Virginia, [Mr. LETCHER,] who represents a different section of the country from that which I represent. I am pleased to say that the gentleman from Virginia and myself can talk over this matter like men, as become statesmen, without undue excitement. I am willing—having held a seat here for some time, and expecting to continue here for some two years more—to say to this House and the country what I understand to be the northern sentiment prevailing in the free States, *so far as I understand it*; and I wish to do it in a dispassionate manner, that all shall explicitly comprehend my views. I do understand that, in the convention which framed the Constitution, it was understood, most distinctly and explicitly, that slavery was a State institution, confined to State jurisdiction, with which the Federal Government neither had nor should have any power to interfere.

Mr. LETCHER. I want the gentleman to come to the present issue. I want to know what we may expect now, not what has occurred heretofore.

Mr. GIDDINGS. I will do so. Mr. Gerry declared in that convention that slavery was a *State institution*; that while the Federal Government had no jurisdiction over it, we should be careful to lend it *no sanction*. To this that body lent an implied approval, no member dissenting from it, but all apparently coinciding with the view of Mr. Gerry. Now, sir, I say to the honorable gentleman from Virginia, and to the House, that the freemen of the free States intend to carry out in practice this doctrine of the Constitution and the fathers of our Republic. We intend to separate this Government and the people of the free States

from all responsibility and all guilt of sustaining oppression, of upholding slavery, and direct its action to the encouragement of liberty, virtue, and the elevation of our race. Our people intend to be purified from the crimes and iniquities of slavery and the slave trade. While we leave the institution with the slave States, untouched by our legislation; while we guard all the States in the enjoyment of their privileges, we will protect our own rights with equal assiduity.

Now, sir, in order to do this—for I only rose to state to my friend what I understand to be the issues involved in the present conflict as to slavery in the District of Columbia, to which the gentleman last alluded—I will first reply, that we will secure to the people here “*popular sovereignty.*” We will repeal the laws which we have enacted, which now sustain slavery and the slave trade here, and leave the people of this District to maintain their “*popular sovereignty,*” of which we heard so much from my friend and his party at the last session of Congress. I mean *all* the people, black and white, permitting each to be sovereign of his own conduct, so long as he interferes with the rights of no other person. That we will not, by the law of Congress, rivet the chains, nor put hand-cuffs upon our fellow-men here; that we will withdraw our power from the support of slavery, and leave the whole people of this District to enjoy their popular sovereignty. I do not think we shall ask the people of the District whether we may separate ourselves from the support of slavery here; we will do it of our own emotion, our own judgment. We will not share the guilt, nor the disgrace, of upholding the slave trade here, of sustaining the practice of rearing boys and girls for the market in this city. We are not going to interfere with slavery here; we will cease to interfere with that institution; but we will encourage freedom, not slavery. We do not intend to say that men here shall be *free*. God and nature have said that—and we will protect the rights which our Creator has conferred on mankind.

And I further say to the gentleman, that, in the next place, we will take good care to follow in the footsteps of Jefferson, and of the Congress of 1787, and exclude slavery from every foot of territory belonging to this Government by *law of Congress.*

I say again, I have had some experience here, and expect to be a member of the next Congress; and I do expect, as I expect to live and get back here, to see the next Congress bring in a bill, and pass it through this body, that shall strike the chains from every slave within the territory of the Federal Government. This, sir, is the great and principal issue on which nearly all men of all parties at the North unite, which no party can withstand. Some may hesitate on other points, but this is one on which we intend to unite in all elections, making it a test with all candidates for office; but we will do it without excitement. [Laughter.] With this, however, is connected another, the exclusion of any slave State which may seek admission into the Union. We will never give to another State the odious superiority over ourselves of holding an influence over the free States proportioned to the number of their slaves, allowing five slaves to be equal to three of our freemen. The man who would thus degrade the freemen of the North will be regarded as a traitor to northern honor and northern interests. We intend doing this, and I would respectfully say that no threats of dissolving the Union will deter us. That mode of frightening our people has been too often and too long resorted to. It has lost its prestige. It has ceased to frighten our school girls. We hope to act like statesmen, like men who have their country and their country’s good at heart, who labor for freedom, for the happiness of mankind. We expect to maintain the rights which we ourselves hold under this Government. We intend that freedom, the liberty of man, shall be the objects of this Government, and not slavery. Understand—for I have been misrepresented for twenty years—I have never thought of interfering with the rights of the slave States: I have never maintained upon this floor, by the wayside, by the fireside, nor have I, in public or in private, intimated that we possess the power to interfere with slavery in the States. On the contrary, I repeat, that while we protect the Constitution, and assiduously maintain it in its full force, we will take care to maintain the rights which it confers upon the North, as well as the privileges of the South; we will maintain the rights of the free States, as well as those of the slave States. Our rights in Ohio are equal to those of the other States. We mean to wield the Government for the purpose of maintaining the freedom of every foot of soil subjected to the laws of Congress, and against the extension of the slave power by admitting any new slave State.

The next point, Mr. Chairman, is that of prohibiting the sale of any human being under process issued from the Federal courts. We will not prostitute the process of the Federal courts to the purpose of selling men and women at public auction. I want my friend to understand this issue in its full length and breadth.

Next, we will repeal the law of 1807, authorizing the coastwise slave trade. We will not protect the slave trade on our southern coast, nor will we lend our power to encourage

men while dealing in slaves. The pirate that hangs at the yard-arm on the coast of Africa is less guilty, in our opinion, than the man who deals in Christian slaves in this city. We will, therefore, repeal the law referred to, which authorizes the transportation of slaves under the flag of the United States. It is *our* flag, and it shall not be prostituted to such damnable and disgraceful purposes. We will purify it, and leave slave-dealers to take care of their slaves in their own manner. We will not suffer our moral purity to be contaminated by the infamous traffic in human flesh. We will lustrate ourselves from it. We will purify the Government from it. Do not talk about the dissolution of the Union; we mean to elevate the people of the *southern* as well as those of the northern States. Our object is the increase of intelligence, virtue, and happiness of all the people.

Mr. Chairman, besides all this, we are of the opinion that we shall let the slaveholders catch their own slaves. We will not go one step beyond the law of 1793. That law gave no process, but allowed the slaveholder to catch his slave if he could, and permitted the slave to escape if he could. That law was signed by Washington. It was an enactment of those who had framed the Constitution in part. That law gave no process, authorized no officer to issue process, made it the duty of no officer to arrest a slave; nor did it require northern men to aid in such arrest, nor pay the expense of taking such back to servitude. The law of 1850 is, in all these points, unconstitutional. Our feelings revolt at these provisions—we will not carry them out, nor will we obey them. I therefore say that the furthest extent to which we will go will be to restore the law of 1793. We will not catch your slaves for you. It is humiliating, degrading to our natures. Why, sir, let me ask the gentleman from Virginia whether he would turn out, run after, and catch a slave for any other man under heaven?

Mr. LETCHER. Go on.

Mr. GIDDINGS. Will you answer? I will reply to any question propounded to me on this important subject. But as the gentleman from Virginia does not answer, I will ask the gentleman from Pennsylvania, [Mr. WITTE,] whether he would run after, chase down, and catch a slave for a slaveholder?

Mr. LETCHER. I have not surrendered the floor to the gentleman. I want him to go on. When he concludes I intend to comment on the revelations which he has made, and may yet make before he concludes.

Mr. GIDDINGS. I am commenting on the last point. We will live up to all our constitutional obligations; there we stop. If you can catch your slaves when they get away into our northern States, do it; we will not catch them for you; we will not appoint officers for the purpose of catching them; we will not pay for catching them. The Constitution imposes no such obligation upon us. Catch your slaves as you can, but do not ask us to lay aside our feelings of manhood, our moral principles, our independence, and self-respect, to catch them for you.

Mr. Chairman, I can just here give an illustration. A fugitive slave came to me and asked my advice as a lawyer. It was when we were under the old law; and I did not hesitate to advise and counsel those who called on me. Looking the man full in the face, I said: "Do you believe, sir, that God created you with the soul and feelings of a *man*? That he endowed you with the inalienable right to life, liberty, and happiness?" "I do," was his prompt and earnest reply. "Have you the manhood to assert and defend those rights?" "I have," said he. "Then do it," was my reply. "I cannot defend you; but, were I in your place, I would defend my liberty while I could wield a weapon." I do not hesitate to tell them that they are *men*; that we shall not stop them. We let them know that we can do nothing; that they are left to their own manhood for protection.

I wish, Mr. Chairman, no misunderstanding in this matter. We will not be catchpoles for southern slaveholders. We will stand purified from the institution. No law will, no law can, compel us to catch the slaves. There is, there can be, no law which will force northern men, elevated and intelligent freemen, to turn out and give chase after runaway slaves. We have had demonstration of what I say lately in Wisconsin. There it was attempted to involve freemen in this slave-catching policy. You have seen the result. Popular sentiment is opposed to it. Our feelings of humanity, our principles of Christianity forbid it; our constitutional rights are opposed to it.

Mr. LETCHER. The gentleman has got through with all my queries to him, and he is now branching off on other subjects.

Mr. Chairman, I am very well satisfied that I gave the gentleman from Ohio [Mr. GIDDINGS] the opportunity for the interruption which he has made. He has stated, with that frankness and that candor which he has uniformly exhibited when discussing this question, the sentiment and purposes of the North, so far as he has been able to learn it. We all know that he is well posted up as to the sentiment of the northern people, as to their purposes and objects, so far as any action, present or future, connected with slavery is con-

cerned. He says they are for repealing the fugitive slave law; that they are in favor of allowing the South to recover, as they best can, the slaves who have run away from their owners when they have reached a free State. He says, also, that he is for that sort of legislation that will remove slavery from the District of Columbia, the navy yards, and all other territory owned by the United States. He says that he is in favor of preventing the inter-State slave trade, and for confining slavery to the States where it now exists; that he is not disposed to allow slavery to go into any of the Territories of the United States; but that, on the contrary, he is determined, and the North are determined, to restore the Missouri compromise line, and to prohibit slavery forever from the Territory of Kansas, even though the people of that Territory may be unanimously in favor of its introduction.

Mr. GIDDINGS. I ask the gentleman to allow me to correct him in one particular. The gentleman speaks of my proposing to prevent the inter-State slave trade. That is not precisely my position. So far as the transportation of slaves from one slave State to another internally is concerned, I have nothing to do. It is the coastwise slave trade upon the high seas that I propose to prevent. Congress have the right to make regulations for the navigation of the high seas, and I desire that this shall be one of them.

Mr. LETCHER. Very well; take it as it is now stated, and it presents a point which it is utterly impossible for the South to yield. It is pushing this interference to an issue where it would be disgraceful for the South to attempt to shun it, and she will not attempt to shun it. To accede to the terms thus dictated to her by the North, is basely to surrender all claim to her property, and to admit that wherever it goes beyond the limits of a slave State and enters a free State, it becomes, in the language of the gentleman from Ohio, "sovereign" in the State to which it may flee for the time being.

Mr. Chairman, under such circumstances as these, the gentleman from Ohio says he has no idea that I, or any one who comes from the South, would be inclined to sever the bonds of the Union—that we have talked too much upon that subject—and that we will submit hereafter, as we have always submitted heretofore. In other words, that there is not spirit enough in the South—that there is not manliness enough in the South—to stand by southern rights, to uphold southern interests, to protect southern property, and to defend slavery whenever it shall be assailed by our enemies; from any quarter whatever! Sir, do northern gentlemen entertain this opinion of us? Do they believe that we have been reduced to so abject a position, that we have not the courage to assert our rights, nor the power to defend our property? If such is their opinion, then their conduct in endeavoring to bring about a dissolution of the Union, by forcing upon us the measures indicated to-night, is precisely what might have been expected. They ought not to desire a longer connection with us. They will find, sooner or later, if these questions are pressed, that they have been sadly mistaken. If we cannot be considered as the equals of the gentleman from Ohio, and the equals of those whom he represents upon this floor; if the North are determined that we shall not have peace on this vital subject; if they are determined to press it at all hazards, regardless of consequences to themselves and to us, be it so. We shall have the agreeable reflection of knowing that we are not to blame; that the evil results cannot be charged upon us; that the North, and the North alone, is to blame. If the Union shall be dissolved, they cannot say we did it.

But the gentleman from Ohio says the North will not submit to have her rights interfered with. Sir, will the gentleman be good enough to tell us when and where the South has ever interfered, either directly or indirectly, with the rights of the North? When have we of the South endeavored to take away—to steal, by the aid of "*underground railroad*," by force or fraud, or by any other means—the property of the citizens of the North? Have we ever made such an attempt upon the constituents of the gentleman from Ohio? Never, sir, never! I believe the gentleman professes to hold to the doctrine of the State rights, as declared in the resolutions of 1798 and 1799. I think the declaration he has made to-night is very much the same, in substance, with that made a few days ago by Mr. WILSON, the Massachusetts Senator, in the other end of the Capitol. These two gentlemen hold very much the same opinions in reference to State rights, slavery, the fugitive slave law, the Nebraska bill, and other questions of a kindred character. They both hold to the doctrine that the North shall declare the law, and the South shall have the glorious privilege of submission. The North is to make its demands, and the South is to yield a prompt obedience to those demands. The North is to prescribe its rules, and the South is to comply with them promptly and without a murmur.

Now, let me tell the gentleman from Ohio, that whatever he may think of the spirit of the South, he will find that there is a spirit there that will not submit to such requirements. I speak to the gentleman as coolly and calmly as I ever uttered a sentiment in my life, when I say that men of all parties in the South—Democrats, Whigs, by whatever name known, or by whatever organization they are united—will be found faithful, in the hour of trial, to

the rights, interests, honor, and institutions of the section of the country in which their lot is cast. They will never consent that the southern section of country shall occupy in this Union that craven, base, and degraded position which he has assigned to us. Whenever that day shall come, the gentleman may rest assured that the South will be a unit; that all party lines and all party divisions will be obliterated; that there will be one party in the slave States known only as the defenders of southern rights. Whenever we must surrender our *rights*, or give up the Union, there will be no hesitation in making the selection. We can live without you. We can manage our own relations. We have the means among us that will give us wealth and power, and far better is it that we should go and live by ourselves than that we should submit to such unrighteous and iniquitous demands as have been asserted here to-night. The time has come when the South must prepare to defend her institutions against the aggressive spirit of the North.*

The gentleman thinks the South has no spirit. Sir, let him wait until the next session of Congress, when these measures shall be attempted to be carried out, and he will see of what stuff the South is made. He will see whether we shall quietly sit here, and whether our constituents will tolerate the idea of our quietly sitting here and submitting to such injuries as he has proposed to inflict upon us. The sunny South is our home. It is the land that gave us birth. It is the land in which is deposited the bones of our ancestors. Within the bosom of my own State sleep Jefferson, and Henry, and Madison, and hosts of others whose deeds have illustrated and adorned the annals of our country. And, sir, shall we permit our enemies to invade the sanctity of those homes and those firesides? No, sir; the South will be protected and defended by her sons, at whatever cost, and you will find that there is spirit enough left to repel any attempt at interference with our rights or our interests.

Now, sir, there is still one other point to which I desire to allude. I wish to know from the gentleman from Ohio whether he endorses the sentiments contained in the correspondence which appeared a few days ago in the American Organ of this city.

Mr. GIDDINGS. Will the gentleman be a little more explicit? I do not know precisely to what he alludes.

Mr. LETCHER. I mean the correspondence between Mr. Ellis and Mr. Wilson, the Senator from Massachusetts.

Mr. GIDDINGS. I endorse that part of it written by Mr. Wilson, fully. I do not know much about that of Mr. Ellis.

Mr. LETCHER. Do you endorse all the sentiments expressed by Mr. Wilson.

Mr. GIDDINGS. I do endorse all the sentiments expressed in that correspondence, so far as to say, that the Federal Government has no power of interference with the existence of slavery in the States. My friend must know that I have laid down that doctrine in express terms, but a little more in detail than it is contained in that letter.

Mr. LETCHER. Well, let me try the gentleman on another point a little more explicitly.

Mr. GIDDINGS. A moment, if you please. What we intend to do is to purify this Government from the institution of slavery, and leave that institution entirely with the States.

Mr. LETCHER. Upon the principle, I suppose, that, as we inherit it from the North, their children feel the strain of it and want to relieve their ancestors from it.

Mr. GIDDINGS. Well, I can go into that question if the gentleman wishes it.

Mr. LETCHER. Stop a moment. There is another question which I wish to put to the gentleman. Suppose he had been interrogated on the question of slavery, and the power of the Government over slavery, what would have been his answer?

Mr. GIDDINGS. I do not believe I should have done it better than Mr. Wilson.

Mr. LETCHER. Would you not have gone a little further than he does?

Mr. GIDDINGS. I might have gone more into detail. But if I had undertaken to do it in a brief and comprehensive manner, I should probably have done it in nearly the same terms as he has done. His letter contains everything that I have said to-night, only I have elaborated and gone more into detail.

Mr. LETCHER. I should like to know whether the gentleman from Ohio and Mr. Wilson both belong to the same organization—the Know-Nothings?

*The following extract from the Richmond Whig, February 27, 1855, shows that I am not mistaken in the temper and patriotism of the South; all our people will be true:

"We have thus given only a brief sketch of the debate last Friday, in order to let the southern people know its true purport and character. It is useless to say that when these doctrines of WILSON and WADE are attempted to be carried out by Congress, there will be an end of the Union. The South will not submit to such Abolition incendiaryism. If they shall succeed in their purposes, it will, indeed, be a dark day for the country. Upon them, however, and those who sustain them, will rest the responsibility and all the consequences. As much as we love and revere the Union, we had rather see it shivered into a thousand pieces than to submit to the degradation which SEWARD and his vile confederates propose to heap upon the South. It is for them, not for the South, to determine whether the Union, hallowed in so many respects and for so many reasons, shall survive or die."

Mr. GIDDINGS. No man will impute that to me. I know something. [Laughter.] I have known enough, at all events, to keep me here for twenty years. [Renewed laughter.]

Mr. LETCHER. I know the gentleman is not practically a Know-Nothing. I know that very well. But whether he is theoretically a Know-Nothing, and *practically* upon the same platform with Mr. Wilson with regard to the slavery question, is what I want to know.

Mr. GIDDINGS. My friend, I suppose, asks me if I belong to that political or moral organization called Know-Nothing in the common language of the day. I can say to my friend, that, individually, I "know nothing" about that organization whatever, either by precept, example, or anything else, excepting, of course, what I have seen in the public press. [Laughter.]

Mr. LETCHER. I find that nobody has any personal knowledge about that organization. They all "know nothing" about it. [Renewed laughter.] And I have yet to see the first man upon this floor—although it has been proclaimed that a number of seats in this Hall are occupied by Know-Nothings—who will acknowledge that he is one. The gentleman from Massachusetts [Mr. BANKS] could not be screwed up to it the other day, although every man in this House would swear that the gentleman is a member of the order. [Laughter.]

Mr. BANKS. No one asked me the question.

Mr. LETCHER. Well, then, I ask it now. Will the gentleman answer me?

Mr. BANKS. What?

Mr. LETCHER. Do you belong to the order of Know-Nothings?

Mr. GIDDINGS. One moment, if you please. I want to answer the gentleman from Virginia.

Mr. LETCHER. Oh, I cannot get anything out of you. [Laughter.]

Mr. GIDDINGS. I only want to say that I do not belong to any organization of that kind, whatsoever.

Mr. LETCHER. Very well. That is frank.

Mr. GIDDINGS. I have no knowledge of any such organization.

Mr. LETCHER. Now, let me try the gentleman from Massachusetts. Does he belong to the organization called Know-Nothing, that he has been the subject of comment by the gentleman from North Carolina [Mr. RUFFIN] to-night?

Mr. BANKS. I belong to an organization—not that I know that it is called by the name of Know-Nothing—but that answers the description that is generally understood by that name in my own town. Nobody has asked me the question before. I have never declined to answer it, and nobody has "screwed me up to it."

Mr. LETCHER. Then I have gotten one anti-slavery gentleman here to acknowledge the corn. [Great laughter.] He is the first. Now, many others are said to be here, and I should like to know of the gentleman from Massachusetts, since he acknowledges himself to be a high priest in the organization, how many of his followers are members of this House?

Mr. BANKS. I do not know one.

Mr. LETCHER. It is very remarkable that the gentleman should be the head of a family, and know none of his children—is it not? [Laughter.] I take it that the gentleman is about as nearly a *practical* Know-Nothing as you could well get. [Renewed laughter.] I have heard it said that it is one of the rules of this organization to know nothing, to know nobody, to say nothing, to hear all they can, to retail all they hear, and to make the best use of all they hear, and I think, after the last answer of the gentleman from Massachusetts, the House will have no difficulty in arriving at the conclusion that the party has been pretty accurately described.

Now, let me call attention to another fact in connection with this matter. Here is Senator Wilson, who is said to be a Know-Nothing. That is a conceded fact, as I understand. I take it the gentleman from Massachusetts knows the fact.

Mr. BANKS. I do not.

Mr. LETCHER. Does the gentleman mean to deny that he and Mr. Wilson are brethren in the same organization, sailing under the same colors, and struggling for the same ends?

Mr. BANKS. Mr. Wilson and myself have long been struggling for a change in the politics of Massachusetts. Whether he is a member of the organization to which the gentleman alludes, I never knew, and have no knowledge any more than from what the gentleman says is the general report.

Mr. LETCHER. Then there is a general report to that effect, and it is most remarkable that gentlemen living in the same State, one the leader of the Know-Nothings from his State in this House, and the other occupying the same position in the Senate, and that each should not know whether the other belongs to the organization! [Laughter.] It does

strike me as most extraordinary that there should be an organization which they say is sweeping over the country, from North to South and from East to West, obliterating all old party lines, breaking up all old party organizations, burying all "old fogy" politicians and demagogues, and building up all things anew, and which is to give us a sort of political millenium, and yet of these two men of political prominence, residing in the same State, having the same political objects in view, and struggling for the same political ends—the relief of their State from the power of the party that has hitherto controlled it, under the lead of Webster and Everett—and yet neither knows whether the other belongs to the organization!

Mr. GIDDINGS. Let me put one interrogatory to the gentleman.

Mr. LETCHER. Not just now.

Mr. GIDDINGS. One short question only.

Mr. LETCHER. I have no doubt the gentleman from Ohio feels sympathy for his brother Abolitionists from Massachusetts, and would like to get him out of this scrape.

Mr. GIDDINGS. I answered your question.

Mr. LETCHER. Yes; the gentleman answered me frankly enough.

Mr. GIDDINGS. Then let me ask if you are a Know-Nothing. [Laughter.]

Mr. LETCHER. No, sir; neither practically, theoretically, morally, socially, or in any way.

Mr. GIDDINGS. That is the usual answer. [Roars of laughter.]

Mr. LETCHER. Let me say to the gentleman more than that: that whenever I shall join a society, whenever I shall get my own consent to join a political organization that I shall not have the manliness to say I am a member of, I trust I shall not be here, nor in any other position where confidence shall be reposed in me by a just and generous constituency, such as I represent here. [Cries of "Good!"]

But let me get back to the point I was discussing. Here, then, is Mr. WILSON, admittedly elected to the Senate of the United States by a Know-Nothing Legislature—one almost unanimously so. There was one lonely Democrat there, I believe—the only poor soul who could muster votes enough to get into the body, (laughter)—and there were some four or five Whigs, but the remaining four or five hundred all belonged to this organization. Is it not so? I pause for a reply. Now, I have heard that none of those men are bogus Know-Nothings, in the popular acceptation of the term, but that they are all of the real genuine stripe. Can the gentleman from Massachusetts tell me how that is?

Mr. BANKS. I cannot say.

Mr. LETCHER. The gentleman "*cannot say!*" Well, sir, I take it that the people of the South will want to know before they are disposed to go the full length in this matter.

Well, let us come still nearer home. There is the State of Pennsylvania, in which an election for Senator was to take place to-day. There is a strong party of Know-Nothings in the Legislature of that State. We know that they have been in trouble for some considerable time in regard to the election of a Senator, and we have seen in the papers which reached the city this morning the letter of General Cameron, *their* candidate, announcing his platform of principles, and it is the identical platform which has been laid down here to-night by the gentleman from New York, [Mr. GOODWIN,] and the gentleman from Ohio, [Mr. GIDDINGS.] Now, how is it, that with an organization professing to be *national*, and to have no other object in view but the preservation of the Union, the perpetuity of our institutions, and the glory, honor, and prosperity of our common country, that whenever they are called upon to elect officers, their candidates come in on anti-slavery platforms? How does that accord with the principle of *nationality* that is claimed for the organization? How does it harmonize with that devotion to the Union, that anxious desire to preserve all our institutions, to build up our trade, and to advance everything that is the common property and the common glory of *all the citizens* of this great nation? How do gentlemen undertake to explain these facts? Yet so it is. That is the result. Here is the New York election. Here is the Pennsylvania senatorial election. Here is the Pennsylvania congressional election, where even the Nebraskaites and the Democratic anti-Nebraskaites were swept down in one common wreck. Here is the congressional election in New York, which they say was brought about by Know-Nothings.

Mr. WITTE, (interrupting.) Will the gentleman from Virginia allow me to make a remark which bears upon this point of his speech?

Mr. LETCHER. Certainly.

Mr. WITTE. It is this: that there is not one single member from Pennsylvania who will come to this House, in the next Congress, for the first time, as an anti-Nebraska man, who has not been elected by a combination of what there is of the Abolition element in our State, with Know-Nothingism and anti-Nebraskaism.

Mr. LETCHER. I am very much obliged to the gentleman for his information.

Mr. WITTE. I desire that point to be clearly understood, because I do not wish the old Commonwealth to be misrepresented, and the title "Democracy" to be prostituted. I want it

to be distinctly understood that every member not a Democrat, who comes here for the first time in the next Congress, has obtained his seat by an unholy coalition between the three elements which I have designated: Abolitionism—what there is of it in the State—anti-Nebraskaism, and Know-Nothingism.

Mr. FLORENCE. With a sprinkling of Maine-lawism.

Mr. LETCHER. I am very much obliged to the gentleman from Pennsylvania [Mr. WITTE] for the facts he has furnished. Now, sir, let us look at some of the other States. Here is the State of Ohio, for instance. Will there be a solitary Nebraska man from that State in the next Congress, because, if I understood the gentleman from Ohio, [Mr. CAMPBELL,] some time ago he said there would not be a Nebraska man from that State in the next Congress?

Mr. CAMPBELL. Not one, thank God!

Mr. LETCHER. "*Not one, thank God!?*" Put it down, sir, as the gentleman uttered it. When you come to the State of Indiana, how many do you think are left there to tell the tale?

A MEMBER. Two.

Mr. LETCHER. Mr. MILLER and Mr. ENGLISH are the only two left in that State. What brought about these results there? Was it the same thing as in the State of Pennsylvania? Was it brought about by Know-Nothing influence? Was it the same thing which has brought new members and a Senator here from the State of Illinois? Was it the same thing which brought so many new members here from the State of Wisconsin? And these, I believe, embrace about all the elections, save that of Massachusetts, which have occurred since last fall.

A MEMBER. Michigan.

Another MEMBER. New Jersey.

Mr. LETCHER. Yes, there is Michigan. I had neglected that, and New Jersey, where the same result is effected. Here then comes, last of all, the State of Massachusetts. She sends an entire new delegation, I believe, with the exception of two. What was the cause of that change, sir? Were not the gentlemen who are now here strong enough in their opposition to Southern institutions and to Southern rights, to secure the retention of their position? Did they differ in respect to the fugitive slave law, or on any other question from the gentlemen who will appear here in the next Congress? The only difference between them, sir, is, I imagine, that those who come here in the next Congress come fresh from the people, come with all the feelings, with all the animosities, with all the prejudices which have been engendered by this combination in Massachusetts, and, therefore, with a more bitter and more determined spirit to accomplish their purpose, cost what it may. The result in Massachusetts is an admitted Know-Nothing triumph, and in many of the other States I am informed that the Democratic party was defeated by the power and influence of this new organization. I do not charge that the southern Know-Nothings sympathize with the views of northern Know-Nothings on slavery.

[Here the hammer fell.]

Speech in the House of Representatives, January 30, 1856, on the adoption of the plurality rule, which resulted in the election of N. P. Banks, jr., as Speaker of the House.

Mr. LETCHER. Mr. Clerk, I have been opposed, from the first to the last, to the adoption of the plurality rule. I regard it as a question involving principle; and, so regarding it, it can never receive my favor or support in this House. The southern portion of this country is in a minority here in the House of Representatives, and in a minority in the other wing of the Capitol; and one of the greatest securities which we have for the South is the requisition on the part of those elements which make up the North that they shall be required to combine either for the purpose of organization here, or for the purpose of organization in the other wing of the Capitol. Regarding it in this view, and looking at the present state of the elements which are found in this House, I cannot recognise a principle which, in my judgment, is calculated to place that section of country from which I come at a greater disadvantage than it now occupies.

My own view is, that the result of this election is now fixed and certain. I consider the presentation of this plurality rule, under all the circumstances, an indication that it is to meet with success; and I do not see the slightest necessity for postponing what now seems inevitable until Thursday. If the resolution is to be adopted, it seems to me it had as well be done now as at any other future time. If Mr. BANKS is to get a plurality, and, by virtue of that plurality, is to be elevated to the Speaker's chair of this House, I see no reason for a postponement for one day. Regarding it, sir, in this light as fixed and certain, as a test I move that the resolution be laid on the table.

Extract from speech in the House of Representatives, May 13, 1856, on the Kansas Contested Election Case.

Let me take the converse of this proposition. Suppose the party to which the gentleman belongs should get the ascendancy; suppose they succeed in securing the executive authority of this country and both branches of the national Legislature, so that all will work in harmony, how long does the gentleman suppose, under such an Administration, recognizing the principles they profess, and adopting the measures they approve, the Union of these States would endure?

Mr. WAKEMAN. All the time.

Mr. LETCHER. All the time! Then I should be sorry to entertain the opinion of you that you must entertain of us. I should be sorry to believe that even you of the North, were the power of this Government wielded to the destruction of your rights, and in such a way as to deprive you of your property, would tamely submit without resistance, and without a murmur. So far as the South are concerned, sir, I tell you now what I have no doubt will be the act—what I believe firmly and conscientiously, that, if you should have power here, and undertake to pass measures to carry out the principles which you profess, you would find that we had spirit enough to separate from you, and make the effort, at least, to take care of ourselves.

A VOICE. What measures?

Mr. LETCHER. If you undertake to repeal the fugitive-slave law, and deprive us of the means of recovering our property when it is stolen from us, that is one of the measures to which I allude, and I believe that the chairman of the Judiciary Committee is for the repeal of that law. If you undertake to abolish slavery in the District of Columbia, and prohibit it in the Territories of the United States by congressional legislation, and if you undertake to declare the sites of the various forts, arsenals, and dock-yards of the South free territory—and I take it that the chairman of the Judiciary Committee is also in favor of all these—you will find that the South, if it has a particle of self-respect—and I know that it has—will be prepared to resist any, and all, such measures.

But, sir, I hope that things will never come to this issue; that the cloud now hanging over us will pass away, and peace be restored to our country. The days of this party, sir, are numbered. I think that I can see the handwriting upon the wall, and I believe that numbers of gentlemen on the other side have seen it, and fully understand it. When the proposition was made by me early in the session, that members should resign, and go home, I heard more than one gentleman on that side of the House say, it would not do, because a very large number of them would never get back again. [Laughter.] I regarded that as a promising sign—a very promising sign for the future; and I think the indications since make assurance doubly sure, that those who rule this House now will rule it but a little longer—that after this Congress is over, their race will be run. I advise them to say their prayers in anticipation of the political death which awaits them, and thus prepare for the dread reality. [Laughter]

Extract from speech in the House of Representatives, July 12, 1856, on the Sumner assault.

There is one other point that I feel called upon to notice. The elder gentleman from Ohio, Mr. GIDDINGS,] in his remarks on yesterday, declared that the effect of slavery was to blunt the intellectual and moral faculties of those who resided in the States in which the institution existed. Now, sir, let me call the attention of the gentleman and the House to one or two historical facts, to show how utterly unjustifiable—how entirely unfounded such an assertion is. Was it not a slaveholder who conceived and penned the Declaration of American Independence, and was he not born, and did he not live, and did he not die, in a slave State? Did the institution of slavery destroy, or even impair his intellectual faculties? Was it not a slaveholder who contributed more than all others to the formation of the Federal Constitution, under which we have so long lived? He, too, was born on slave soil, was reared on slave soil, died on slave soil, and now sleeps in the bosom of the slave State of Virginia. Were his intellectual faculties blunted by this institution? No, sir! No! Was it not a slaveholder who penned the Virginia resolutions of 1798, and the celebrated report of 1799, of which John Randolph once said, ‘To attempt to add anything to them, would be like an attempt to gild refined gold, to smooth the ice, to paint the lily, to throw perfume on the violet, or add another hue to the rainbow,—like useless and ridiculous excess?’ Sir, was it not another slaveholder who drew the Kentucky resolutions at the same period, and on the same great subject? I might give other illustrations, but let these suffice.

Were the intellectual faculties of Mr. Jefferson and Mr. Madison injured by the blighting influence of slavery, when their minds conceived and their pens wrote out these great

papers, or abounding in political wisdom, and displaying such enlarged statesmanship. When the gentleman makes such a charge, he does injustice to himself as well as to others. If the gentleman's mind had not been warped by the passions and prejudices that unfortunately rule the hour, he would not have made so unjust an accusation against the southern section of the Union, in which my lot has been cast. The southern section of the Union will not suffer, in a comparison with the northern, on the score of intellectual vigor and ability; and the charge, therefore, that the institution of slavery has dwarfed them, is unfounded and unjust.

The gentleman charges, also, that slavery hardens the heart, and destroys the moral and religious faculties. Will the gentleman say that the religion which prevails in the northern section of this country is of a higher, holier, and purer character than that which prevails in the South? If it be so, will the gentleman explain to me how it is, that northern ministers of the Gospel go into their pulpits on the Sabbath day, and urge their followers to arm themselves with Sharpe's rifles, for the purpose of enforcing their particular views in Kansas and elsewhere? Is such instruction in accordance with the injunction of that good Book which has been given to them as their guide? Is that such instructions as the Author and Founder of their faith would have given to his followers? He preached peace and goodwill amongst men, and discouraged everything like strife, and contention, and bloodshed. Whenever the gentleman finds such things done in the southern country by southern ministers of the Gospel, in the pulpits of southern churches, on the Sabbath, or any other day, let him then make the charge, that the moral and religious sensibilities of the southern people have been blunted and destroyed. But, until he does find such conduct exhibited by southern ministers—until he can find some instance in which they have preached some other doctrine than "Christ and him crucified," those disgraceful scenes which have occurred in northern pulpits—those disgraceful doctrines which have been proclaimed from the sacred desk, in that section of the Union, should silence his tongue.

Speech in the House of Representatives, August 2, 1856.

Mr. LETCHER said:

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I have listened attentively to the speech just delivered by the gentleman from Ohio, [Mr. WADE,] and before I proceed to the questions which I design to discuss, I desire to notice very briefly one or two points which have been made in that speech.

The gentleman starts out with the inquiry, "Could our fathers have resisted the power of Britain if the slave power had then held the control of this country?" Now, sir, it seems to me the gentleman ought to know that at that time of our difficulties with England, when the war of the Revolution began, all the States of this Union were slaveholding States. The State of New York, and all the States of the original thirteen, recognized slavery. Now, sir, according to the gentleman's theory, is it not somewhat remarkable that, with all our colonies slaveholding, our arms should have been favored by Divine Providence, and our cause so eminently successful? How does he reconcile this glorious result with his theory of the sin, guilt, and shame of slavery?

But the gentleman says, further, that we are dishonoring the memories of our fathers and mothers—those of us, at least, who live in that portion of the Union where slavery is recognized and now exists. How are we dishonoring the memories of our fathers and mothers? Are not our institutions in the South now exactly the same that they were in the days of our struggle with the mother country? Is there any change in that section of country in which our lot has been cast? Has any new thing been introduced into the condition of the southern States that is calculated to throw discredit or dishonor on the ancestors of the present generation? Sir, let the gentleman call to mind the fact that that portion of the Union which has freed itself from slavery, got rid of it, not by acts of emancipation, but by acts on either the *post nata*, or some postponement principle which allowed the slaves to be removed before the law went into effect, in order that they might be disposed of for a full *pecuniary* consideration. Such was the case in New York. It has not been many years since a suit for freedom was tried in my own section of Virginia, instituted by slaves who were taken from New York and sold in my State, in violation of her laws, as they alleged. The owners of the slaves in New York at that day preferred to sell their slaves for money and pocket the proceeds, before the law of New York could go into effect. They had no qualms of conscience then to restrain them. Recognizing slaves as property, they sold and transferred them as property to any one who would purchase and pay for them.

There is another point. The gentleman tells us that he desires "*moderately and temperately*

to draw a line around the southern States," and proclaim to the people of the South, thus far slavery shall go, and not one inch beyond it. The gentleman has given us a sample to-night of his *temperance* and *moderation* upon this subject; and I say God help that portion of this country that is to have lines drawn under his charitable views! His speech to-night is as ultra as any one that I have heard on this floor, from any quarter whatever; and when the gentleman talks about *temperance* and *moderation* on his side, in a discussion of a question like this, he must permit me to say that it is a most scandalous misapplication of terms. [Laughter.] And, in this connection, the gentleman tells us that "*he loves this Union*"—that "*he venerates it*"—that he entertains "*a holy affection for it*;" and here, sir, I might apply his own quotation without disrespect. I imagine that the sentiments of affection he has expressed on this floor for the Union are very much like the affection (in his own language) which "*the Devil has for holy water.*" [Laughter.]

The next proposition the gentleman lays down is, that the phrase in the preamble to the Constitution—"We, the people"—means, not the people north of Mason and Dixon's line, not the people south of that line, but all the people of the United States. I should like to know from the gentleman from Ohio, whether it is his opinion that the phrase quoted from the preamble to the Constitution was intended to include all the people of all colors and complexions; when inserted in that preamble, is he to be understood as saying that it embraced the white people of the States, male and female, and the black people of the States, male and female, and the mulattoes of the States, male and female? and that it was a recognition of that equality between these classes and races which he says is maintained in the Declaration of Independence? Is he to be understood as saying that this clause was intended to cover all and embrace all these classes of people?

When that provision was inserted in the preamble to the Constitution, slavery existed in all the States. Our fathers never intended to declare, nor did they ever admit, by word or act, that the phrase "We, the people," when placed in that preamble, was designed to recognize the equality of the white and black races. No, sir! It refers to, and was intended to include, none other than the white race then existing, and their descendants and successors. They never dreamed of including the negro, because the position in society which he occupied forbade it.

But I was greatly amused at the gentleman's adroitness exhibited near the close of his speech. My friend from Mississippi [Mr. WRIGHT] wished to know of him whether he recognized the right of the southern slaveholders to reclaim their slaves, if they absconded and were found in a free State. I have not heard from him an answer to that question yet. The gentleman talked about a good many other things, but he was particularly careful to dodge that question. And it struck me that there was a reason for it. It has not been quite a week since the gentleman himself voted for a "*fugitive-slave law.*" And, that I may not be charged with doing injustice to that gentleman, I beg leave to call his attention to a bill for which he voted, and for which every other gentleman of his particular tribe voted, save the intelligent and cautious gentleman from Ohio now before me, (Mr. LETCHER.). In the bill of Mr. DUNN for the reorganization of the Territory of Kansas, and the 24th section of that bill, it is, amongst other things, declared:

"That any person lawfully held to service in either of the said Territories shall not be discharged from such service by reason of such repeal, if such person shall be permanently removed from such Territory or Territories prior to the first day of June, eighteen hundred and fifty-eight; and any child or children born, in either of said Territories, of any female lawfully held to service, if in like manner removed without said Territories before the expiration of that date, shall not be, by reason of any thing in this act, emancipated from any service it might have owed had such act never been passed: *And provided further, That any person lawfully owing service in any other State or Territory of the United States, and escaping into either the Territory of Kansas or Nebraska, may be reclaimed and removed to the person or place where such service is due, under any law of the United States which shall be in force upon the subject.*"

Now, sir, the gentleman has been horror-stricken for years over the fugitive-slave law of 1850; and yet, no longer ago than last Tuesday, the scales fell from his eyes, and he and his friends marched up in solemn column, with one exception, and recorded their indorsement of the constitutionality and policy of the fugitive-slave law of 1850. Ever since its assage, he and his allies have denounced it as *unconstitutional* and void, and have addressed the most inflammatory appeals to the people of the northern States to resist its execution.

Mr. WADE. That was a bitter pill, and I tasted it distinctly when I took it; but being driven into a corner by the sham Democracy in their efforts to ingraft slavery upon Kansas, thought it better to let them have the fugitive slave law in Kansas, until I could get a harder lick at it and knock it in the head.

Mr. LETCHER. It "was a bitter pill," and he was "driven into a corner" before he could consent to swallow it! But when "*driven into a corner*" he did swallow it, and voted to re-enact a law which, in the presence of the House of Representatives, before the faces of his constituents, and in his conversations, he has been in the constant habit of de-

nouncing in the most inflammatory language, as a palpable violation of the laws of God, and of the Constitution of his country, which he was sworn to support!

Mr. GIDDINGS. I wish to ask the gentleman a question. Did he not vote against the law?

Mr. LETCHER. I was not here. [Laughter.] I happened to be on that day addressing my constituents, and warning them of the revolutionary conduct being pursued by these moderate and temperate gentlemen on your side of the House, and who constitute your party.

Mr. GIDDINGS. I would like to know whether the gentleman would not have voted for it if he had been here?

Mr. LETCHER. I would not; but not because I considered the fugitive-slave law either inexpedient or unconstitutional. It is sufficient for me to know that it is now the law of the land, in full force and effect. But you, gentlemen, not content with its enactment in 1850, gravely re-enact it, and specially apply it to Kansas; and as you have all now given it your approval, I trust we shall hear nothing more of its unconstitutionality, or of its barbarous features. When you return to your constituents I expect to learn that you have admitted your error—that by the same process of reasoning which has satisfied your own minds, you will satisfy them of its constitutionality, and its accordance with the laws of God, and urge upon them the propriety and duty of a rigid enforcement of all its provisions. This is their duty as *law-abiding* men. Their representatives here have moderated their views, and as they have marched up to it quietly and deliberately, and cast their votes for the fugitive-slave law, heretofore so much denounced, I imagine they are ready to go a little further (and that their constituents will sustain their efforts) to save the Union, which the gentleman from Ohio professes to love so well.

Now, there is one other point in the gentleman's speech which I desire to notice. The gentleman says that every man in this country has the right to bear arms; that it is a constitutional right, and that the Government has no right to interfere with him in the enjoyment of this privilege. I admit this to be true, constitutional ground; and yet that gentleman, and his friends upon that side of the House, voted for Mr. BARBOUR's amendment to the Army bill, which gave the President the power to disarm all the people of Kansas. What a power to clothe an Executive with, whom they denounce as tyrannical! Napoleon III. has no more.

I desire to know whether the gentleman is honoring the institutions, principles, and sentiments of the northern people, of his ancestors, in all his acts, opinions, and principles? In 1786, by the fifth section of an act passed by the Massachusetts Legislature, every white person was prohibited from intermarrying with a negro, and every negro from intermarrying with a white person, and the same prohibition extended to Indians also, and all such marriages were declared void. That provision remained on the statute book until 1843, when it was repealed; and since that time white persons and negroes, under this law of 1843, may be united in matrimony. Now, sir, if I am not very much mistaken, the friends of the gentleman from Ohio, in the Legislature of that State, a few years ago, honored their fathers and mothers by the passage of a similar law. And if you will go through the northeastern States, you will find that in many of them their ancestors have been honored in the same extraordinary way.

These are the people who talk about slavery and its horrors in the South; and yet they are for consummating a union between the races, to ascertain which will absorb the other. Such unions must inevitably degrade the free labor of the North, and sink it far below the slave labor of the South. The free white man, who can get his own consent to such a marriage must have sunk low in the pit of personal degradation—must have forfeited all his own self-respect. Such a man will be a disgrace to any society. Even the respectable negro slaves of the South would scorn all association with him.

Whom are these laws intended for at the North? Are they intended for the benefit of the wealthy—the upper ten thousand—“*the lords of the loom?*” or are they intended as a special boon for the northern mechanic and the day laborer? Are such laws intended by the aristocracy for any other class than those who occupy the position of laborers in the northern States? Is it not astonishing that the laboring classes of the North should have rested so patiently under an insult so gross. I trust they will vindicate their character and their honor by hurling from power and place all who indorse such laws.

This slavery agitation has been going on for many years. About the year 1835 it had attained such a strength in this country, and it had sought to exert its influence upon the slaveholding States to such an extent, by means of the vilest publications and pictorial representations disseminated through the mails, and by travelling agents, calculated “to produce dissatisfaction and revolt among the slaves, and to incite their wild passions to vengeance,” that it attracted the attention of General Jackson, the then President of the Uni-

ted States. He invited the special attention of Congress to it in his message of December, 1835, and recommended a remedy. "In connection," said he, "with these provisions in relation to the Post Office Department, I must also invite your attention to the painful excitement produced in the South by attempts to circulate through the mails inflammatory appeals to the slaves, and in various sorts of publications, calculated to stimulate them to insurrection, and to produce all the horrors of a servile war." In consequence of this recommendation of General Jackson, the subject was taken up by Congress, and an act subsequently passed, which prohibited the use of the mails for such murderous and incendiary purposes.

The objects which the Abolitionists then had in view, as a reference to their petitions will clearly demonstrate, are—

First. The abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia.

Second. The exclusion of slave States from admission into the Union, Florida being at that time particularly struck at by them.

One of the first Governors of any State that took a position in behalf of the agitation, and fully and squarely indorsed it—that undertook to denounce those northern statesmen who resisted the abolition movement, and to denounce all action on the part of the Congress of the United States for the protection of the southern half of this nation against their insane war upon its rights and its peace—was the then Governor of the State of Pennsylvania, Joseph Ritner; and among the men who arrayed themselves prominently in opposition to the recommendations contained in his annual message, was one of the present candidates for the Presidency of the United States. Mr. Buchanan, in his speech delivered at Lancaster on the 18th of August, 1838, immediately previous to the gubernatorial contest between Ritner and Porter, discussed with great power and ability the questions involved in that election; and I quote the following extract from his speech made on that occasion:

"Mr. Buchanan said there was one subject of vital importance to the peace and perpetuity of the Union, which had not occupied much of the attention of the former speakers; and, therefore, he would make a few remarks upon it. He referred to abolition.

"Before the spirit of abolition had been conjured up from its dark abode by political fanatics and hot-headed enthusiasts, all was comparatively peaceful and tranquil in the southern States.

"When the message of Governor Ritner was received in Washington, in 1836, it was considered by all as an abolition message, and, as such, it produced an impression which I shall never forget. With the utmost anxiety depicted on the countenances of inquirers, was I asked over and over again, whether, in my opinion, it spoke the voice of Pennsylvania? The Keystone State, which had been the firmest bulwark of the Union, and had always respected the constitutional rights of her sister States, had embraced, so far as her Governor could commit her, the creed, and had placed herself in the front rank of abolition. *It remains for the people of this great Commonwealth, at the next election, to ratify or reject the doctrines of this message. I consider the question to be one of transcendent importance, involving in itself the fate of the Union, and all that is near and dear to the friends of constitutional liberty, not only here, but throughout the world.*

"I might here also proceed to illustrate the effects of the triumph of this doctrine. What would be your situation, fellow-citizens, if negroes were admitted to an equality of political and social rights with white men and white women? You have already had a foretaste of it in the scenes which were exhibited at Pennsylvania Hall. The subject is too disgusting, and I recoil from it."

These extracts show the position Mr. Buchanan then occupied upon this exciting subject, and set forth frankly the great consideration that influenced his mind in taking that position at that early day. He admonished his people then, that it was a war commenced which must sooner or later, if it continued, end in a dissolution of the Union. At that very time, as now, the ground was taken that slavery must be abolished in the District of Columbia; that no more slave States should be admitted into this Union; that no more slave Territories should be organized; that the North was to resist even the admission of Florida—a State lying at the extreme South, hundreds of miles distant from any free State, and bounded only by the slaveholding States of the Union.

These gentlemen say slavery is to go no further. Now let us see what has been the past action of their fathers in regard to the question, so that we may ascertain how far they are honoring their ancestors in the course which they are now pursuing. Since the formation of this government with the original thirteen States, eighteen have been added to the Union, making the present number of thirty-one; and of these eighteen so added, nine have been free States, and nine have been slave States. And these new States, with the exception of one or two, have been admitted *pari passu*, or with very short intervals between the admission of the northern and of the southern States, in order that the equilibrium might be kept up between the North and the South in the Senate. Let me call attention to the order in which they came into this Union, under the rule and influence of our ancestors, who filled the seats in Congress which are now held by us.

Vermont and Kentucky, Tennessee and Ohio, Indiana and Mississippi, Illinois and Alabama, Maine and Missouri, came in together, or near the same time. And, mark you, sir, when Missouri was admitted, the State of Maine was cut off from the then State of Massachusetts for the purpose of keeping up the equilibrium between the North and South. When has a slaveholding State been divided for any such purpose as this, in the history of the Govern-

ment? And where is the record to show that our fathers from the South were then, as you are now, resisting every effort to keep up the equilibrium between the North and the South, and thereby preserve the rights of both sections by the equipoise in the Senate? So it was with Arkansas and Michigan. So it was with Florida and Iowa. But how is it now? The equilibrium is destroyed. You have sixteen of the States of this Union, while we have but fifteen. You have, therefore, a majority of the Senate; you have a majority of both branches of Congress. And if now you are to have the Executive—if you can wield the power of the Senate as you can wield the power of the House, to what extent do you propose to go? Do you propose to try the experiment how far we will submit—quietly and tamely submit to your demands? Do you propose, as suggested by the gentleman from Ohio, to exercise your power *moderately* and *temperately*, to draw a line around the slave States, and see whether we will submit?

Not only that, but look at the advantage you have gained over us in another respect. Out of the seven organized Territories now in existence, six of them are free, to wit: the Territory of Minnesota—which I understand you propose to divide, to admit one portion as a State now into the Union, and to organize the residue into another Territory, which is also to be free—the Territory of Oregon, the Territory of Utah, the Territory of New Mexico, the Territory of Washington, and the Territory of Nebraska—leaving only the Territory of Kansas to become a slave State.

Here you have six Territories, all of which are to be free, leaving but one in which there is a chance for the continuance of slavery. All of these Territories will come into this Union nearly about the same time; and at a time, too, when you have one majority of the States in your favor, and, therefore, the undoubted control of the Senate. To obtain this control, New England is divided into six States—the whole six about the size of Missouri, and greatly less than Texas. The slave States are large in territorial extent, whilst the free States are generally small; and hence representation in the Senate is grossly unequal. Rhode Island is made equal to Missouri, Connecticut is a counterpoise to Virginia; Vermont, with all its abolitionism, is an offset to Georgia, the Empire State of the South. And yet you talk about illiberality, and of the injustice and aggressions of the South! Northern and southern men have voted together in the organization of Territories—they have stood side by side, and no question was raised in regard to them. Now, after you have these advantages secured, you undertake to say you will have all, or—as the gentleman from Ohio [Mr. WADE] says—you will draw the line around the slave States, and exclude us from all participation in the territory secured by the common blood and treasure of all the States of the Union.

Well, what is the pretext now for all the clamor that has been gotten up in the country? The pretext is, that there is a bare possibility that the Territory of Kansas, organized in 1854, may become a slave State. That they are not *sure* they have obtained all, has so excited the northern people that they feel bound to resist, and are determined to resist, the laws of Congress, unless Kansas shall be surrendered by the South—shall become a free Territory, and consequently a free State. When the Kansas territorial bill was under consideration here, the editorial leader of the present revolutionary party who wields the power in this House—none other than Mr. Greeley, of the New York Tribune—proclaimed that he would rather see this Capitol “blaze by the torch of the incendiary,” than that the Kansas bill should become a law.

The following is an extract from one of his many incendiary articles on this subject:

“We urge, therefore, unbending determination on the part of the northern members hostile to this intolerable outrage, and demand of them, in behalf of peace, in behalf of freedom, in behalf of justice and humanity, resistance to the last. Better that confusion should ensue—better that discord should reign in the national councils—*better that Congress should break up in wild disorder—nay, better that the Capitol itself should blaze by the torch of the incendiary, or fall and bury all its inmates beneath its crumbling ruins, than that this perfidy and wrong should be finally accomplished.*”

From the time this article was written to the present hour, Greeley and his allies have spared no effort to array one section of the country against the other. They are the advisers and indorsers of all the revolutionary movements on foot here. In this connection I quote from a late letter of W. O. Duval, another leading New York Republican, to show the purposes of these men:

“I sincerely hope a *civil war* may soon burst upon the country. I want to see American slavery abolished in my day—it is a legacy I have no wish to leave to my children; then my most fervent prayer is, that England, France, and Spain *may speedily take this slavery-accursed nation into their special consideration*; and when the time arrives for the streets of the cities of this ‘land of the free and home of the brave’ to run with blood to the horses’ bridles, if the writer of this be living, there will be one heart to rejoice at the retributive justice of Heaven. This, of course, will be treason in the eyes of the doughfaces in this land. Well, they are familiar with Dr. Henry’s celebrated prescription—‘make the most of it.’”

They went to work to execute the purposes so boldly avowed by these Republican leaders. After the Kansas-Nebraska bill was passed, who were the first to organize a party here for the purpose of resistance? I do not know whether you, sir, [Mr. HAVEN,] were one of the

number or not, but I understand that the gentleman who presides over this House [Mr. BANKS] was one of the leading spirits in the organization. Mr. MACE has testified before the Kansas investigating committee that he was one, and he has stated that that organization was made up of nearly all the members of the anti-Nebraska party of this House. What object was that organization intended to secure? In the language of Mr. MACE, "the leading, primary object of the association was to prevent the introduction of slavery into Kansas;" and they believed that, unless "vigorous steps of that kind were taken, Kansas would become a slave State." They were not willing to leave the question to the decision of the people of the Territory.

The following are extracts from Mr. MACE's testimony, on page 1132, report No. 200, House of Representatives :

"Immediately after the passage of the Kansas-Nebraska act, I, together with a number of others, who were *members of Congress and Senators*, believing that the tendency of that act would be to make *Kansas a slave State*, in order to prevent it formed an association here in Washington, called, if I recollect aright, '*the Kansas Aid Society*.' I do not remember all who became members of that society, *but quite a number of members who were opposed to slavery in Kansas, of the lower House, and also of the Senate, became members of it, and subscribed various sums of money*. I think I subscribed either \$50 or \$100; I am not now prepared to say which.

"I think Mr. Goodrich, of Massachusetts, was the President of the society. I am not certain about the vice-presidents; probably Mr. Fenton, of New York, and myself, were vice presidents. The names of the president and vice presidents were attached to our circulars, which we sent throughout the country.

"My recollection is, that, generally, those members of the House and Senate who were opposed to the Kansas-Nebraska act became members of this society, and contributed to it.

"I think no other object was mentioned or specified, except *the prevention of slavery in Kansas*. I think that was the sole object of the movement.

"I do not recollect whether Mr. Speaker Banks was a member of that society or not, or whether Senator Seward was or not. Mr. Goodrich kept the books. My impression is, that a majority of those who voted against the bill were members of that organization. I do not remember the total amount of money raised by means of that organization."

That is what was done just after the passage of the bill by the members of Congress here at the Capitol. This was the first step. Well, then, sir, let us see what was done in Kansas as the next step in the progress of the revolution. At the meeting held at Big Springs, on the 5th September, 1855, (see page 89,) it was

"Resolved, That *every reliable free-State man in the Territory be furnished with a rifle, a brace of pistols, and a sabre gratis*; and that he be required to take an oath to come when called upon, and muster into service under his superior officer, *and to sacrifice his life*, if necessary, to rescue the person and property of any person who would be brought under the jurisdiction of the present laws of the Territory."

Such are the recommendations in Kansas. "Every reliable free-State man in the Territory" was to be "furnished with a rifle, a brace of pistols, and a saber gratis," and he was to be bound to fidelity by the obligations of "an oath." Their purpose to resist the laws of the Territory by force is boldly avowed in this resolution.

These are "temperate" gentlemen; "moderate" gentlemen! They are law-abiding men! They love this Union! they respect the Constitution! and they are anxious to see them preserved! And yet, after the Kansas bill was passed by a constitutional majority of both Houses of Congress—after it was constitutionally approved by the President, and became a law of the land, the very men, many of whom have been subsequently sent to Kansas by Senators and Representatives in Congress, met together and "peaceably" adopted a resolution to furnish every man with "a rifle, pistol, and sabre," to exclude the South from Kansas by the use of money and arms.

Let us see what more they did. I charge here that they swore them to the commission of *treason*, and I intend to prove it. Out of their own mouths will I convict them. From the evidence taken by the commission sent to Kansas, as embodied in the report to which I have before referred, I will demonstrate the charge which I have preferred against J. H. Lane and his free-State conspirators.

I rely on the deposition of the Rev. Andrew J. Francis, which was taken by the commission in Kansas, and is recorded at pages 91, 92, 93. Here is the oath which he says was administered to him by James H. Lane, a leader in the treasonable order of the "*Kansas Regulators*," of which Andrew H. Reeder was also a member. Listen to it, I beg you, with attention:

"I of my own free will and accord, in the presence of Almighty God and these witnesses, do solemnly swear, that I will always *hail, forever conceal, and never reveal any of the secrets of this organization* to any person in the known world, except it be to a member of the order, or within the body of a just and legal council. I furthermore promise and swear, that I will not write, print, stain, or indite them on anything movable or immovable, whereby the least figure or character may become intelligible to myself or any other person. I furthermore promise and swear that I will at all times, and under all circumstances, hold myself in readiness to obey, even to death, the orders of my superior officers. I furthermore promise and swear, that I will at all times, and under all circumstances, use my influence to make *Kansas a free State*. I furthermore promise and swear, that, all things else being equal, I will employ a free-State man in preference to a Missouri man, or a pro-slavery man. I furthermore promise and swear, that all business I may transact, so far as in my power, shall be transacted with free-state men. I furthermore promise and swear, that I will at all times, and under all circumstances, hold myself in readiness to take up arms in defence of free-State principles."

And to what extent? I ask the majority of this House, who have undertaken to indorse these men, to listen to what extent: "Even though it should subvert the Government!" And

yet there is found a majority of this House—a large majority of gentlemen on this floor from the northern portion of the Union—who are ready to indorse the conduct of this man, who is now claiming admission into the other end of this Capitol as a Senator—a man who administers oaths that impose the crime of treason upon the party who is to fulfil the obligation!

Sir, are not these revolutionary times? Has anything like this ever been heard of before in the Capitol of these United States? Has anybody been found willing to indorse men who have subscribed to an oath to commit treason against the Government of the United States? But, sir, that is not all. Hear the balance of this horrid oath:

"Even though it should subvert the Government, I furthermore promise and swear that I will, at all times, and under all circumstances, wear upon my person the regalia of my office and the insignia of the order. I furthermore swear that I will, at all times, and under all circumstances, wear on my person a weapon of death. I furthermore promise and swear that I will, at all times, and under all circumstances, keep in my house at least one gun, with a full supply of ammunition. I furthermore promise and swear that I will, at all times, and under all circumstances, when I see the sign of distress given, rush to the assistance of the person giving it, even when there is a greater probability of saving his life than of losing my own. I furthermore promise and swear that I will, to the utmost of my power, oppose the laws of the so called Kansas Legislature. I furthermore promise and swear that, when I hear the words of danger given, I will repair to the place where the danger is. I furthermore promise and swear that, if any part of my obligation is at this time omitted, I will consider the same as binding when legally informed of it. I furthermore promise and swear that, at the first convenient opportunity, I will commit this obligation to memory. To all of this I solemnly swear, without equivocation or self-evasion, binding myself under the penalty of being declared a perjurer before Heaven and a traitor to my country."

After this oath had been repeated to him, Mr. Francis stated to Lane that it "was a very serious obligation." Lane replied "it was," and then proceeded to instruct him in the signs, grips, and pass-words of the order. After detailing much other conversation, the witness says:

"I remarked to the Colonel that I was sworn to support those laws in taking my oath as a lawyer, and that I considered that that oath was administered by a higher power than he exercised, and hence I should not keep the obligation he had given to me; and under no circumstances would I do anything to subvert the institutions of the country, or place myself in opposition to the laws; and he might depend upon it, I would expose it the first convenient opportunity. I also told him I could not consistently keep both obligations that had been imposed upon me; that I was also a member and minister of a religious denomination, and that it would not be consistent with my Christian duties to keep the obligation he had imposed on me; that I should most certainly, when the subject came up, expose it. He stated then to me, that if that was my determination, and I did express myself so publicly, I would hardly get away from the city with my life. I replied to him that I would express myself so under all circumstances, both in public and private."

Talk about the evil effects of slavery upon the morals and patriotism of those who own this species of property! When or where has the history of the South been disgraced by such acts as sully the characters of these free-State patriots of Kansas?

Again, sir: Andrew H. Reeder was before this House the other day, and received eighty-eight votes for his admission as Delegate from the Territory of Kansas. He was not elected in pursuance of any law, but in defiance and violation of all law—territorial and congressional—and yet, sir, eighty-eight men (members of this House) voted to assign to him the seat of Whitfield. In a letter to one of his brethren in Kansas, bearing date January 20, 1856, (while he was in attendance upon this House,) Reeder advised the packing of juries, as a "surer reliance" for free-State men than the Supreme Court. His letter will be found on pages 1134 and 1135 of the report:

"You speak of your probably coming on here in February, as the Legislature meets in March. I do not see how you can do this, in case you are elected; nor do I now see how you are to get your case into the Supreme Court of the United States, except by writ of error, and that can only be after judgment, and at great expense; nor do I see how you can raise, in the Supreme Court, any point as to the validity of the laws, except the one of their removal to the Mission. I have, however, not examined the case; still, I should think that a few free-State men on the jury would be a surer reliance than the Supreme Court. I should hesitate long before spending much money on the latter. I note what you say about Lane. It is all very well; but it is a good rule never to make an enemy unnecessarily, or to aggravate one without cause. Why not continue to correspond for the 'Post,' or some other paper?"

"Remember me kindly to Robinson and Conway and other friends. Latter is also here.

"Yours truly,

A. H. REEDER."

Such is the man whom you have been seeking to bring into this House; a man who never has claimed that he was elected in pursuance of any law of the land; a man who has advised his followers, for the purpose of defeating the great ends of justice, to pack juries; and yet, with this evidence spread out before them, eighty-eight men in this House have voted to admit him as a Delegate from the Territory of Kansas! Verily, sir, these are strange times, and things are greatly out of joint, when men can, by the mere force of party drill, be brought up to a position like this. But let us go a little further: I now call the attention of the committee to some remarks of Mr. Thayer, who is the treasurer of one of these emigrant aid societies, and who delivered an address at Brooklyn, New York, last winter. I have that address now before me, and desire to call attention to certain portions of it, to show the power of the organization, its purposes, and the means employed:

"I come to ask you if this mighty organization shall be sustained?

"They go as the apostles of liberty in the West.

"The first men who went to Kansas went there to establish freedom.

"But there are other reasons why this organization ought to be sustained. It benefits the country by placing in the West the institutions of the North.

"If this is done," [the power of the organization increased,] "the lecturer pledged himself to furnish men who would put themselves under bonds that Kansas will be a free State."

"There was even a possibility that the emigrant aid society or some other northern organization, would yet direct their efforts towards the colonization of Virginia."

"It is a fact that the North can be united upon one thing, and that is making money; and money power is the only power that is fit to be pitted against slavery."

These extracts furnish food for serious and anxious reflection. They show clearly that the purpose has been to make Kansas free territory, even if it were found necessary to subvert the Government to accomplish the object. Kansas secured, their efforts are then to be directed to Virginia.

The proposition is here laid down, that *their money, their associated wealth, their capital* in the North, is to be used for the purpose of increasing their power, and is to be placed in the scale against the South, in the hope, and under the confident belief, that the South is to be weighed down by their money power. These are the means they rely upon to carry out their schemes in regard to this territory of Kansas. They expect by the aid of money to accomplish, not only in the Northwest and the West, but by means of its influence to accomplish in the South, all that they desire to effect.

Six of the seven Territories are under northern institutions and influences; and yet such unlawful practices to exclude southern men and southern institutions from the seventh and last Territory are upheld, countenanced, and passionately justified by a majority of northern Representatives in Congress.

Are such practices in accordance with the views and judgment of the people of the North? I think not. The fanatics think they are. An authoritative decision at the polls will soon decide, beyond the possibility of mistake, which opinion is correct. I wait that decision with confidence and with hope. Upon that decision depends vast interests, and the future harmony and welfare of our country. May the electors so discharge their high duty as to honor, in verity and truth, their high-toned, just, constitution-respecting and Union-loving forefathers!

The Topeka constitution—the premature offspring of anarchy—comes next in these revolutionary movements. The convention which framed the constitution was not in any sense legally or properly organized, and the adoption of the constitution was not the result of the regular and solemn action of the popular power of the Territory. Its adoption was a miserable farce, without a parallel in the history of the nation. In proof of this, let candid men decide when they shall read the facts of its history as they are recorded:

"About midnight the President said :

"Gentlemen: The constitution has been read for the first time; those in favor of its passage will signify the same by saying ay."

"Ay!" shouted every delegate without exception, in a loud and enthusiastic tone.

"I move that the constitution be read a second time by its title," said Mr. Parrot.

"The constitution of Kansas," read the Secretary.

"Those in favor of its passage," said the President, "will signify by saying ay."

"I never saw such a perfectly dramatic scene as I looked at when the President said so. Every delegate involuntarily held up his hand and shouted ay—half rising as he gave in his vote.

"I move that the constitution be read by its title a third time," said Mr. Delahay.

"It was read the third time, and the President again put the question.

"An enthusiastic 'ay' succeeded.

"The constitution is adopted," said the President.

"Three cheers for the first free constitution of Kansas," said Mr. Schuyler, of Council city.

"Every delegate and spectator immediately raised his hat, and waving it in the air, gave three times three loud, long, and hearty cheers."

"As the sound of the cheering died away, the hour and minute hands of our watch were pointing at twelve."

Such was the mode of its adoption, as described by an eye-witness—the correspondent of the St. Louis Democrat.

This constitution, thus adopted, a majority of the House desire to recognize. It is my purpose to show that a constitution gotten up in such manner violates every principle which lies at the foundation of our Government, and is at war with the genius and sober usages of the American people. In support of this position, I will rely upon an authority which I suppose no northern man will question. I allude to Daniel Webster's great argument before the Supreme Court of the United States, in the case of *Martin Luther vs. Luther M. Borden*, and others, delivered on the 27th day of January, 1848. I will hurriedly enunciate the principles laid down by Mr. Webster, for the purpose of making an application of those principles to this Topeka constitution, and the manner of its adoption :

"First, and chief, (said Mr. W.,) no man makes a question that the people are the source of all political power Government is instituted for their good, and its members are their agents and servants."

Again, Mr. Webster says :

"Let all admit what none deny, that the only source of political power in this country is the people. Let us admit that they are sovereign, for they are so; that is to say, the aggregate community, the collected will of the people, is sovereign."

Again, Mr. Webster says :

"Having agreed that all power is originally from the people, and that they can confer as much of it as they please,

the next principle is, that, as the exercise of legislative power, and the other powers of Government immediately by the people themselves, is impracticable, they must be exercised by the *Representatives* of the people; and what distinguishes American governments as much as any thing else from any other governments of ancient or of modern times, is the marvellous felicity of their representative system."

Again, Mr. Webster says :

"The power is with the people; but they cannot exercise it in masses or *per capita*; they can only exercise it by their representatives.

"Now, the basis of this representation is suffrage.

"This being so, then follow two other great principles of the American system :

"The first is, that the right of suffrage shall be guarded, protected, secured against force and against fraud. And the second is, that its *exercise* shall be prescribed by *previous law*; its *qualifications* shall be prescribed by *previous law*: the *time and place* of its exercise shall be prescribed by *previous law*; the manner of its exercise—under whose supervision—*always sworn officers of the law*—is to be *prescribed*. And then, again, the results are to be certified to the *central power* by some *certain rule*, by some known public officers, in some *clear* and *definite* form, to the end that two things may be done; first, that every man entitled to vote may vote; second, that his vote may be *sent forward and counted*, and so he may *exercise his part of sovereignty* in common with his fellow-man. In the exercise of political power through representatives we know nothing, we never have known any thing, but such an exercise as should be carried through the *prescribed forms of law*; and when we depart from that we shall wander as widely from the *American track* as the pole is from the track of the sun."

Let me make an application of these principles to Kansas. Was the "right of suffrage," as exercised in the election of delegates to the convention that formed the Topeka constitution, "guarded, protected, and secured against force and against fraud?" Were they elected under and by virtue of law, passed by any competent authority, either congressional or territorial? Were there any sworn officers to conduct that election? Was there any certain place or central point to which the results of the election might be certified? Were there any of the forms and solemnities of law which were calculated to guard the ballot-box, and to protect it against force and against fraud? Was anything done to secure a fair expression of the public sentiment of all parties in the Territory—to allow every man to vote who had the right to vote, and to deny to those who had not that right the privilege of voting?

I defy mortal man to show a solitary instance in the history of this country where there has been a greater departure from the "American track" than in this instance of the Topeka constitution, which was brought in here and adopted by this House.

Hear Mr. Webster again :

"We are not to take the will of the people from *public meetings*, nor from tumultuous assemblies, by which the timid are terrified, the prudent are alarmed, and by which society is disturbed. These are not *American modes* of signifying the will of the people, and they never were."

Once more from Mr. Webster :

"Is it not obvious enough that men cannot get together and count themselves, and say they are so many hundreds and so many thousands, and judge of their own qualifications, and call themselves the people, and set up a government? Why, another set of men, forty miles off, on the same day, with the same propriety, with as good qualifications, and as large numbers, may meet and set up another government," &c. "What is this but *anarchy*?"

Yes, sir! and what was it in Kansas but "*anarchy*?" A set of desperate men, lustng for power and place, got together, declared that their party constituted the majority of the people of Kansas, judged of their own qualifications, and set up a State government. If Mr. Webster were living, and had this day written the lines I have just read in your hearing, he could not have described the conduct of the free-State party in Kansas with greater accuracy and force. Indeed, these lines look as if they had been written with special reference to this case : "*What liberty*" (said Mr. W.) "*is there here, but a tumultuary, tempestuous, violent, stormy liberty—a sort of South American liberty, without power except in its spasms—a liberty supported by arms to-day, crushed by arms to-morrow. Is that our liberty?*"

"Is that *our liberty*?" No, thank God! Ours is a liberty regulated by law. It is not "a liberty supported by arms." It is not a "violent, stormy liberty of the South American" kind. Ours is a rational liberty, and such it has been everywhere in our country, until a band of lawless men in Kansas inaugurated revolution, boldly assailed the laws of the land, and attempted to subvert the Government.

In the year 1843, Mr. Clay addressed a letter to Rev. Walter Colton, in which he requests Mr. C. to write a tract on the subject of Abolition, and in that letter he speaks of the Abolition party in the following language :

"It is manifest that the ultras of that party are extremely mischievous, and are hurrying on the country to fearful consequences. They are not to be conciliated by the Whigs. Engrossed with a single idea, they care for nothing else. They would see the administration of the Government precipitate the nation into absolute ruin before they would lend a helping hand to arrest its career."

After making several suggestions in regard to the points which should be made in the tract, he says :

"But the great aim and object of your tract should be to arouse the laboring classes in the free States against abolition. Depict the consequences to them of immediate abolition. The slaves, being free, would be dispersed throughout the Union; they would enter into competition with the free labor—with the American, the Irish, the German—re-

duce his wages, be confounded with him, and affect his moral and social standing. *And as the ultras go both for abolition and amalgamation, show that their object is to unite in marriage the laboring white man and the laboring black woman, to reduce the white laboring man to the despised and degraded condition of the black man.*"

I have no time to comment on these views of Mr. Clay. Having alluded, in another part of my remarks, to some of the points suggested in these extracts, I pass on to other questions which I feel called upon to discuss, and which, in my judgment, demand the serious consideration of the national conservative men of our country.

This revolutionary spirit exists not only in the Territory of Kansas, but I fear it is spreading. It has shown itself here among us. On the 21st day of July, the distinguished gentleman from Indiana [Mr. DUNN] addressed this House. I listened to his remarks on that occasion with regret. I could but lament that his brilliant genius was not employed in denouncing those who are fomenting and encouraging strife in Kansas, by the aid and comfort which they are furnishing to the revolutionary party there.

Every gentleman will recollect the fire, the energy, and the severity which marked the utterance of every sentence. When it was delivered, the House was taken by surprise. No one expected (at least I did not) such sentiments from that quarter. I knew he was opposed to the repeal of the Missouri compromise, and was anxious to see it restored; but it never occurred to me that he was willing to "*cut off the supplies and stop the wheels of Government,*" unless that restoration were effected. The restoration of that odious line will never give "*peace*" to the country. The extracts which I quote from that speech will show its tone and spirit:

"The chairman of the Committee of Ways and Means [Mr. Campbell] has told us we must remain here until the appropriation bills are passed. Sir, I have intimated heretofore, and now deliberately repeat, that, until some measure shall be passed into a law which will, to my mind, give assurance of a just and permanent settlement of these troubles in Kansas, no appropriation will ever pass this House by my vote. I will not grant one dollar to maintain and advance the movements of the Government in a course which promises nothing but universal ruin. I will give no support and no countenance in any way to such a deplorable state of affairs as we are now in the midst of; much less will I give means still further to advance and aggravate this condition of things. I speak for myself alone, and without reserve or hesitancy. I would cut off the supplies and stop the wheels of Government, rather than let it move an inch further in its present most ill-directed and perilous course. If those who control that course are refractory—if they will not heed the clear and distinct utterances of an overwhelming public sentiment, justly aroused to indignation against a great wrong—if the dangers that threaten us will not warn or check them—I would cut off the sinews of power, and thus compel *submission* to an overwhelming public necessity. [Cries of 'Good!' 'That is it!' 'That is the doctrine!'] I would promptly and sternly meet the consequences of such a course, whatever they might be. It is a remedy allowable under our institutions. It is not revolutionary or violent, but lawful, peaceful, quiet, and effective. It is a means of certain redress against the abuse of power and attempted usurpations, without the terrible resort of revolution."

And again, near the conclusion, I quote this emphatic language:

"Sir, from the first to the last, I have steadily labored with an unwavering determination that has never faltered since the passage of the Kansas-Nebraska act, until this moment, for the restoration of the Missouri restriction.. With a purpose that I have never lost sight of, and that I never will lose sight of, until that is accomplished, so long as I hold a seat upon this floor, or can, by my vote elsewhere, promote that object, I shall continue to labor with unyielding stubbornness for that restoration in some shape or other. I am impelled to this, because, in the first place, it is right; and in the second place, because there is no peace for the country, and there can be *no peace* until that is—in substance or in terms—in some form or other—accomplished. Let gentlemen North and South consider the matter well, and they will be constrained to the same conclusion. Let them remember, if they please, that in all *future time*, or until this restriction is again applied to the Territories of Kansas and Nebraska, there neither can, nor will be peace. I speak this with no meaning of offence or spirit of threatening, but rather as a fact which men may deplore or defy as they will; such is our certain, our necessary future."

I know not how they may be regarded by others, but, to my mind, these sentiments are revolutionary, and, if carried out, political confusion and ruin must be the result. When those sentiments were responded to upon the other side of the Hall by the term "*Good, good!*" it was calculated to make the impression, not only upon the minds of this House, but upon the mind of the country, that there was a party here, who, in the language of Colonel Lane, were ready to carry out their purposes, "even though it should subvert the Government."

Look at the amendment which has been ingrafted upon the Army appropriation bill. The remarks made upon the other side of the House to-day, in regard to the appropriations for the salaries of the territorial officers of Kansas, show clearly that they are ready "*to cut off the supplies, and to stop the wheels of Government,*" be the consequences what they may. They have the power—we shall see whether they will use it.

There is another thing in this connection to which I wish to call attention. While these gentlemen have undertaken on all occasions here to denounce the President of the United States, there never has been, in the history of this Government, a higher tribute paid to executive honesty and integrity than was paid unconsciously by the gentleman from Ohio, and his allies, in the adoption of his amendment to the Army bill. The whole power of the army is placed by these gentlemen at the discretion of the President to suppress insurrection, to repel invasion, and to keep peace and order in Kansas, without anything to control his action save his own mere will. Those very gentlemen who have been assailing him for months as untrustworthy, and as having prostituted his office for the purpose of increasing

the slave power, have voted for this amendment. The Republican majority have secured its adoption, and it now stands as the recorded evidence of their confidence in Franklin Pierce:

"Provided, nevertheless, That no part of the military force of the United States herein provided for shall be employed in aid of the enforcement of the enactments of the alleged Legislative Assembly of the Territory of Kansas recently assembled at Shawnee Mission, until Congress shall have enacted either that it was or was not a valid Legislative Assembly, chosen, in conformity with the organic law, by the people of the said Territory: And provided, That until Congress shall have passed upon the validity of said Legislative Assembly of Kansas, it shall be the duty of the President to use the military force in said Territory to preserve the peace, suppress insurrection, repel invasion, and to protect persons and property therein, and upon the national highways in the State of Missouri, from unlawful seizure and searches: And be it further provided, That the President is required to disarm the present organized militia of the Territory of Kansas, and recall all the United States arms therein distributed, and to prevent armed men going into said Territory to disturb the public peace, or aid in the enforcement or resistance of real or pretended laws."

Let it go forth to the country, that the majority here, in direct opposition to all their professions, have passed this proviso, and have thus given assurance to the nation that implicit reliance can be reposed in the President's wisdom, honesty, and patriotism.

In these revolutionary times it was not to be expected that the judiciary could escape the assaults of the enemies of law and order. In the Washington correspondence of the New York Daily Times, of the 30th of July last, Judge Crawford, of this district, is thus spoken of;

"It becomes an important question, what shall be done to reform the criminal court of this District? Impeach Judge Crawfurd, some say. I answer that party spirit will sustain him, and, for proof, refer to votes of Congress already recorded during the present session. Another remedy is to legislate him out of office; that cannot be done, because the democratic Senate will interpose its negative, or President Pierce his veto. The only thing which can be done is to refuse to vote his salary in the general appropriation bill, and so force him to resign. The measure is an extreme one; but if it is necessary, as it would seem that there can be no doubt, the friends of justice and humanity ought not to hesitate."

In this age of revolutionary progress, everything must be made to conform to the will of the dominant majority here. Even the judiciary, created for the protection of person and property, must decide according to the will of the majority in this House, or be legislated "out of office." Must the earth quake before the people cease to sleep?

And, finally, it has been intimated, in reference to the presidential election, that if the ballot-box does not secure a triumph for their candidate, they will try the merits of the cartridge-box. If Colonel Fremont cannot secure strength enough before the people to elevate him into the presidential chair, other means are to be resorted to.

I allude in this connection to the remarks of James Watson Webb, an editor of one of the organs of the Republican party—an editor who yields a vast influence over that party, and has much to do in directing its movements. In the Philadelphia convention he is represented to have said:

"They ask us to give them a nomination which, when put fairly before the people, will unite public sentiment, and, through the ballot-box, will restrain and repel this pro-slavery extension, and this aggression of the slaveocracy. What else are they doing? They tell you that they are willing to abide by the ballot-box, and willing to make that the last appeal. If we fail there, what then? We will drive it back, sword in hand, and, so help me God! believing that to be right, I am with them." [Loud cheers, and cries of 'Good.]

Is not this the language of a revolutionist? Is it not the language of a man who regards the success of his party as of far more consequence and importance than the peace of his country? If they fail to secure a triumph at the polls, then they will resort to arms! Let all true national men who love the Union bear these things in mind, and prepare to meet the alarming issue tendered.

A word or two more in regard to the Kansas question, and I am done. When the Territory of Kansas was first organized, Missourians, in common with citizens of the other States, feeling a deep interest in the institutions of their own State, and anxious to secure protection, as far as possible, to their interests, removed over in large numbers into Kansas, staked off their claims, and made all the necessary arrangements to remove their families at the earliest moment. Had they not the right to do it? Was it not a part of the privileges of American citizens, when that Territory was thrown open to settlement, if they thought they could better their condition, secure homes more desirable, advance their happiness, and promote their pecuniary interests, to go, in common with others, into that Territory, and found institutions like their own? I imagine there never has been a time in the history of Kansas when a majority of the people of that Territory were not citizens of the State of Missouri. At this time I imagine that a majority of the entire population of Kansas are those who have removed from the State of Missouri into the Territory.

And now let us see what you propose to do. Suppose your proposition to remove the army from Kansas is carried out—an army located there upon your own application—what would be the result? Strife, war, and bloodshed, between free-State settlers and the settlers of the pro-slavery party in that Territory. Is there a man among you, from all the northern States, in the event of such difficulties occurring in that Territory, who would

ot, in his own district, raise one regiment and furnish it with supplies and ammunition, and send it into the Territory for the purpose of protecting, aiding, and sustaining his free-state friends? Is there one man upon the other side of the House who, when war had actually broken out, and life was being sacrificed—when everything portended a battle which must end in the extermination of one party or the other—I say, is there one upon that side of the House who voted for the admission of Andrew H. Reeder as delegate, who would not under such circumstances, recommend to his constituents to arm themselves, and encourage them to march to the aid of their free-State brethren? The pro-slavery party would take the same course, and thus both parties would send their regiments into that territory, from which the United States troops, in obedience to your wishes, and in conformity with your legislation, had been withdrawn. If that army had not been sent to preserve the peace, we should have heard far louder shrieks for freedom than have yet been heard. They would have been heard all over the country. It was necessary to pursue that course in order to protect the free-State party in that Territory, and save them from the hands of those they had so lately outraged. Had the army been withdrawn, the result would have been that we could have had a sectional fight long before this day. The South would have sent men and money to the assistance of their friends, and the war would have been waged between the two sections of the Union; and Kansas would have been the battle-ground at first, but the war would have been extended until both sections were involved—inextricably involved. Do you desire to scatter the seeds of revolution and anarchy broadcast over the country? Do you desire to array section against section, brother against brother, father against son, in hostile strife? A very large number of the people of the West were born and reared in the slave States, and many of their friends and relatives yet live in Virginia and other parts of the South.

I again ask, what is your purpose? Will you continue to encourage these restless spirits in Kansas to throw off the restraints of law, and to contemn the established authority of the Government? Will you continue to countenance their efforts to overthrow the laws—to dispel social and political order under foot—to stimulate their passions and to inflame their prejudices? Will such a course be likely to restore peace between the North and South, and restore the fraternal feelings and affections which ought at all times to exist between the people of these States. You can control them if you will; you can check the tumult, calm the storm, and put an end to the reign of sectional strife. If you will not do it, then I appeal to "*the prudence of the country and the sober wisdom of the people*" to relieve us from the evils and dangers that threaten the overthrow of our system of free government.

Gentlemen on the other side of the House tell us that supplies will never be voted until miners in Kansas are arranged to their satisfaction. What is necessary to be done to satisfy them? From the intimations which have from time to time been thrown out by the leaders in this House, it is not difficult to determine. They demand that all the territorial laws shall be abrogated or suspended until Congress shall have passed upon the validity of the Legislative Assembly of Kansas; that persons regularly and legally indicted for crimes of the gravest character against the laws, shall be discharged from custody; that territorial officers who, in the faithful discharge of their public duties, have rendered themselves obnoxious to the dominant majority here, shall be removed, and their places supplied by supple tools of the revolutionists. These are their modest demands, and if they are not complied with, the regular, the usual appropriations are to be denied, and the wheels of government are to cease their steady and uniform revolutions, "*Rule or ruin*" is their motto. The Executive and the Senate must yield to their demands, or they will press forward their revolutionary projects to the great hazard of the peace of the country, its prosperity, and the best interests of the people.

If this is to be your rule of action—if you have determined to withhold all the appropriations necessary to keep the government in motion—if the whole revenue is to be collected and locked up, and not a dollar to be paid out—it is well enough for the people to inquire, what will be the effects upon the commercial, financial, and business relations of this great nation? What will be its effects upon the trade, upon the commerce, and upon the mechanical interests of the cities of New York, Boston, Philadelphia, and Baltimore? They must be disastrous to the last degree. Universal distress and pecuniary embarrassment, in those localities, is unavoidable. All who are connected with them will sooner or later share in the ruin in which they will be overwhelmed. The circle must continue to enlarge itself until it shall embrace within its baleful influence all of the great business interests of the people of the thirty-one States that make up this Union of ours. The passions of the people are inflamed, their prejudices are stimulated to the highest pitch of excitement, and everywhere around us a sectional storm rages wildly, and threatens, in its fury, to engulf the ship of state. If, in this critical condition of things in both sections of the Union, you,

by your reckless action here, shall bring bankruptcy and pecuniary ruin upon the country; may not the most undaunted patriot well tremble for the consequences?

I believe that the Union is in imminent danger—

“This hour’s the very crisis of our fate.”

If the Union shall be destroyed, upon you will rest the responsibility ; and let me admonish you, in the eloquent language of my gifted predecessor, (now no more,) that, ‘you allow it to be overthrown, you will get it again when the sun shall go back upon the day of Ahaz;’

When the earth’s cities have no sound or tread,
When ships are drifting with the dead
To shores where all is dumb.”

Speech in the House of Representatives, December 11, 1856, on the result of the Presidential Election of that year.

Mr. LETCHER. I do not propose to engage in the discussion of those questions of policy which have been examined by the gentleman from Kentucky, [Mr. H. MARSHALL,] and the gentleman from South Carolina, [Mr. ORR.] I propose to correct the history as furnished by the gentleman from Ohio, [Mr. SHERMAN,] and also the history relating to slavery at the election, as furnished by the venerable gentleman from Ohio who sits over in the corner “Sleepy Hollow,” [Mr. GIDDINGS.]

We have been told by gentlemen on the other side of the House that the Democratic party are responsible for the continual agitation of the slavery question ; that they have introduced it and kept it up in this Hall session after session ; and that to that party is attributable the constant ferment and ill-feeling between the North and the South on this question.

I have been here for six sessions, including the present, and it is due to the truth of history to say, that at the opening of each session the elder gentleman from Ohio [Mr. GIDDINGS] has been the first, on almost every occasion, to introduce this subject into the debates of this House. He has made regular annual speeches upon the President’s message, at each one of these sessions, if I am not greatly mistaken, and has undertaken to give his views very much at length, in each and all of those speeches, upon the slavery question, and the final disposition which, in his opinion, was to be made of it.

When the gentleman from Mississippi, [Mr. BENNETT,] on yesterday, had read at the Clerk’s desk a paragraph purporting to have been extracted from a speech of the gentleman from Ohio, he was asked whether he ever uttered those or similar sentiments in this Hall debate. I understood him to say, not that he had never uttered those sentiments, but that he had no recollection of having uttered them.

I have here a published volume of the speeches of the gentlemen from Ohio, which I found in the public library ; and I propose to call attention to two or three passages in several of those speeches, for the purpose of showing that, if the gentleman did not use the identical language embodied in the extract then read, he has at least uttered the same idea, and, in some instances, the precise words. In his speech in this Hall upon the “joint occupation of Oregon,” pages 159, 160, I find the gentleman from Ohio reported as saying :

“Last year our southern friends expressed great anxiety for ‘Texas and the whole of Oregon.’ They now see difficulties before them; dangers present themselves to the further pursuit of their plan of territorial aggrandizement. They have suddenly called to mind the declaration of British statesmen, that ‘a war with the United States will be a war of emancipation.’ They see in prospect the black regiments of the British West India Islands landing among them, and their slaves flocking to the enemy’s standard. Servile insurrections torment their imagination; rapine, blood, and murder dance before their affrighted visions. These scenes are now seen in every part of the Hall, calling on Whigs and Democrats to save them the dreadful consequences of their own policy. Well, sir, I reply to them, this is *your* policy, not ours; *you* have forced us into it against our wills and our utmost opposition; *you* have prepared the poisoned chalice, and we will press it to your lips until you swallow the very dregs.”

“I would not be understood as desiring a servile insurrection; but I say to southern gentlemen that there are hundreds of thousands of honest and patriotic men who “will laugh at your calamity, and will mock when your fear cometh.” If blood and massacre should mark the struggle for liberty of those who for a long time have been oppressed and degraded, my prayer to the God of Heaven shall be, that justice—stern, unyielding justice—may be awarded to master and slave. I desire that every human being may enjoy the rights which the God of nature has endowed him. If those rights can be regained by the down-trodden sons of Africa in our southern States, by quiet and peaceful means, I hope they will pursue such peaceful measures. But, if they cannot regain their God-given rights by peaceful measures, I nevertheless hope they will regain them; and, if blood be shed, I should certainly hope that it might be the blood of those who stand between them and freedom, and not the blood of those who have long been robbed of their wives and children, and all they hold dear in life.”

Here are passages in a speech delivered many years ago in this Hall, which embody every exceptionable idea embraced in the extract which was read yesterday by the gentleman from Mississippi, [Mr. BENNETT,] and about which the recollection of the gentleman from Ohio was so much at fault.

find in this same book other references to which I desire to call attention, for the purpose showing that these views have been again and again repeated by the gentleman from Ohio. Addressing his prayers to the Throne of Grace, as he says he has repeatedly done, he has asked God to avert the calamity of a servile insurrection from his country, or save southern men, their families and homes, from bloodshed, rapine, and murder. In the 453d page of this same book, in a speech headed "Agitation of the Slave Question," gentleman said:

The people of Boston did not see fit to interfere between the Administration and the 'negroes' of that city. In the name of humanity I thank them for it, and assure them and the country that those whom I represent never will interfere in such case. The citizen who would do so would be driven from decent society in northern Ohio. It is here, on this point, that I take issue with the supporters of this law. That portion commands me to assist in catching slaves is a flagrant usurpation of power, unauthorized by the Constitution. My constituents hold that portion of the law in detestation. They spurn and abhor it. I say, have often said, 'My constituents will not help you catch your slaves.' They will feed the hungry, clothe the naked, and direct the wanderer on his way, and use every peaceful means to assist him to regain God-given rights. If you pursue your slave there, they will let you catch him, if you can. If he deserts himself against you, they will rejoice. If you press him so hard that he is constrained actually to you in self-defence, why, sir, they will look on and submit with proper resignation. In such cases they carry out their peace principles by abstaining from all interference."

Again, I read from the Congressional Globe of 16th March, 1854, page 648, volume 28, where I find the gentleman reported thus:

Sir, I would intimidate no one; but I tell you there is a spirit in the North which will set at defiance the low and unworthy machinations of this Executive, and of the minions of its power. When the contest come; when the thunder shall roll, and the lightning flash; when the slaves shall rise in the South; in imitation of the Cuban bondmen, the southern slaves of the South shall feel that they are *men*; they feel the stirring emotions of immortality, and recognize the stirring truth that they are *men*, and led to the rights which God has bestowed upon them; when the slaves shall feel that, and when masters turn pale and tremble; when their dwellings shall smoke, and dismay sit on each countenance,—then, do not say, 'We will laugh at your calamity, and mock when your fear cometh,' but I do say, when time shall come, the lovers of our race will stand forth and exert the legitimate powers of this Government for freedom. We shall then have constitutional power to act for the good of our country, and doce to the slave."

When the gentlemen upon the other side say that they never intend to interfere with it in States, I call their attention to this declaration, and ask what it means, if it does not mean direct interference with slavery wherever it exists?

When will we strike off the shackles from the limbs of the slaves. That will be a period when this Government will have the power to act between slavery and freedom, and when it can make peace by giving freedom to the slaves. And let me tell you, Mr. Speaker, that that time hastens. It is rolling forward. The present is exerting a power that will hasten it, though not intended by him. I hail it as I do the approaching dawn of that political and moral millennium which I am well assured will come upon the world."

I call attention to these extracts from his speeches for the purpose of showing that these insults upon southern institutions and southern men have been made by the gentleman from Ohio, and those who belong to his party, year after year for a long series of years; and that, far as their opinions and their power could have influence, they have not hesitated to use influence and power in discussions upon this floor and elsewhere, with a view of bringing about the evils and the woes pictured in these remarks. They talk about knocking off chains from the limbs of the slave. To what slaves do they refer? Anywhere else than the limits of the southern States of this Union? Anywhere else than in those portions of southern States which have been ceded to the Federal Government, either for local purposes in this District, or for local purposes connected with navy-yards and dock-yards, to enable this Government to be carried on? Where else are these slaves to be found? The conclusion is irresistible, that they mean to interfere with it in the States, and that such has been their settled purpose for long years past.

When I call upon the younger gentleman from Ohio, [Mr. SHERMAN,] who told us that he belonged to the *conservative* party of the country, that he stood upon the platform of the compromise measures of 1850, and that he was willing to stand there still, to explain how it is that he is at this time in party association and political communion with the senior member of his own State, [Mr. GIDDINGS,]?

Mr. SHERMAN. Before answering that question, I will ask the gentleman whether he approves of the recent message of Governor Adams, of South Carolina?

Mr. LETCHER. I do not; but that has nothing to do with my question, or the subject I am discussing.

Mr. SHERMAN. When the gentleman quotes the language of a particular member, able to defend himself, let him not attribute that language to a party. Let him make his language personal to the gentleman referred to, and not to a party. I might as well condemn the party which Governor Adams supports because of his language. I might as well condemn the party to which the gentleman from Virginia belongs for Governor Adams's language, as condemn the Republican party for the language of the senior member from Ohio.

Mr. BROOKS. The gentleman speaks of Governor Adams as a representative of Democratic party. I would state, for the information of the gentleman, that Governor Adams repudiates the character of a national Democrat. He was opposed to the State of South Carolina being represented in the Democratic Convention.

Mr. SHERMAN. I understand that Governor Adams supported Mr. Buchanan. Governor Adams bears the same relation to the Democratic party, as a supporter of Mr. Buchanan as any member of the Republican party bears to Mr. Fremont, by supporting the Republican party.

Mr. LETCHER: I desire to get the gentleman back to the point. He tells you he is a conservative man, and stands upon the compromise measures of 1850, and yet he undertakes to arraign the President of the United States, in an anti-slavery speech the other day introducing this controversy into the House. He tells you that all was quiet, that there was no agitation or excitement, until the President of the United States by his conduct gave organization, form, and body to the Republican party of the North.

Now, sir, let me call the attention of the gentleman to a historical fact. I came to Congress in December, 1851; and during the first session of my service in this body a couple of gentlemen from the State of Georgia (Messrs. Hillyer and Jackson) introduced resolutions indorsing the compromise measures as passed at the previous Congress. I ask the gentleman from Ohio if he is not cognizant of the fact, that the party of the North with which he then acted—those who then professed to be conservative, and now complain that they have been driven by stress of circumstances into the Republican organization—did not in the number of seventy or eighty, vote against the finality of those compromise measures in 1850, and repudiate their binding obligation as a settlement of the slavery question?

Mr. SHERMAN. In the convention which represented both of the old political organizations the compromise measures of 1850 were declared to be a finality upon this question. Those measures were acquiesced in by nineteen-twentieths of the people of Ohio by the political organizations. The Whig party and the Democratic party in Ohio numbered ten times as many as the party which supported JOHN P. HALE. And I say again, had it not been for the disturbance of this question in 1854, such a thing as agitation of the slavery question could not possibly come from the northern States, or any considerable portion of them.

Mr. LETCHER. If the Whig party of the State of Ohio, to which the gentleman then belonged, acquiesced in the compromise measures of 1850, will he be good enough to state how they happened to send Mr. WADE to the Senate of the United States?

Mr. SHERMAN. I think he was sent in 1850.

Mr. LETCHER. He has been re-elected since, and was sent by the party of which the gentleman is a member.

Mr. SHERMAN. Mr. WADE was elected to the United States Senate in 1849 as a Whig, and that was before the compromise measures of 1850. He has been since re-elected a Republican.

Mr. LETCHER. The gentleman from Ohio tells us that he indorsed the compromise measures of 1850. Now those measures repudiated the Wilmot proviso. Did the gentleman indorse them with that understanding?

Mr. SHERMAN. I indorsed the sentiments which I understood to be at the basis of those measures, and that was, that the question of slavery was settled in every State and Territory beyond the danger of interference.

Mr. LETCHER. Then gentlemen indorsed the compromise measures of 1850, so far as they met their approbation, and rejected them where they did not square up with their peculiar notions. Now, the gentleman says that the Republican organization has been always opposed to any interference with the rights of the master to his slaves in the States, but, when I call on him to explain the sentiments of his senior colleague, he tells me that he is not responsible for those sentiments, and that I have no right to call on him to explain his political connection with him. I understand that he and his colleague both stand upon the Philadelphia Republican platform and indorse its principles and policy.

Mr. SHERMAN. I ask the gentleman—

Mr. LETCHER. Does the gentleman stand upon that platform, and indorse its principles?

Mr. SHERMAN. I stand upon the Philadelphia platform, which alleges that Congress has the power, and that it is its duty, to prohibit the extension of slavery to the Territories of the United States.

Mr. LETCHER. I understand that the gentleman's colleague [Mr. GIDDINGS] aided in constructing the platform upon which the gentleman stands, and upon which the Republican party in the North have taken their position. The gentleman now repudiates him, and clings to the platform which he aided to construct. Let me ask him whether he holds

ARD to be a sound Republican, standing fairly on the platform, and maintaining its principles and policy? Does he indorse the sentiments of Messrs. SEWARD and WILSON on subject of slavery, as they have been repeatedly declared?

Mr. SHERMAN. I can best answer the gentleman by asking him a question. Have the similar sentiments of my colleague been put into the Republican platform? If they have I am not responsible for them; if they have, I am.

Mr. LETCHER. I will not occupy the time of the House by reading the Republican platform. I may perhaps incorporate it into my speech. The gentleman, instead of answering my question, returns to his colleague. I ask him whether Mr. SEWARD is not in full communion with the party to which he belongs; and whether his doctrines are not recognized by those of that party?

Mr. SHERMAN. They are no more the doctrines of the Republican party, as I understand it, than those of Governor Adams, of South Carolina, are those of the Democratic party. So with Van Buren and others.

Mr. LETCHER. I learn that the Governor of South Carolina, so far from being a Democrat, and acting in connection with the Democratic party, and approving its principles and measures, would not acknowledge any connection with it, and opposed the platform upon which our candidates for the Presidency and Vice-Presidency were elected.

Mr. ORR. He was a Whig in 1840.

Mr. LETCHER. The senior gentleman, repudiated by his colleague from Ohio, was in convention at Philadelphia which framed the Republican platform, and nominated John C. Fremont, and he stood shoulder to shoulder with him during the late canvass. We did hear then that there was any disagreement between them in regard to the platform or principles which lie at its foundation.

I have called attention to this matter for the purpose of showing that it has been part and parcel of the system of these gentlemen for years, not only to war on the institution of slavery in the District of Columbia and in the Territories, but also to war against that institution in the several States where it then and now exists. I will read an extract from a speech by Mr. SEWARD, at Cleveland, Ohio, in 1848.

Mr. SHERMAN. That was before the Republican party existed.

Mr. LETCHER. But its present leaders were born, and had a political existence and growth at that time.

Mr. SHERMAN. I ask the gentleman if it would be a fair mode of argument for the gentleman of the people, to notice the opinions of all the Democrats who have voted with the party from the foundation of the Government to the present time, and to allege that the Democratic party now holds sentiments which it has disavowed?

Mr. LETCHER. We can better settle the question by reading the sentiments of Mr. SEWARD, and then ascertaining whether the gentleman from Ohio will now indorse or repudiate them. Mr. SEWARD says:

"Every man can be limited to its present bounds; it can be, and it must be abolished, and you and I can and do it."

Does the gentleman approve or disapprove those sentiments?

Mr. SHERMAN. If the gentleman will give me the balance of this time, I will define the precise position which I occupy on the subject of slavery.

Mr. LETCHER. That is rather an unreasonable request. Let the gentleman answer my question, and say whether he approves or disapproves of those sentiments thus proclaimed by the country by Mr. SEWARD?

Mr. SHERMAN. I cannot answer a question of that kind yes or no; but I will state briefly my opinions on the subject. But from what book does the gentleman read?

Mr. LETCHER. From a pamphlet copy of the speech of Hon. R. W. Thompson, of Indiana, delivered at Terre Haute, on the 11th day of August, 1850. Do you deny what I read to be a true extract from Mr. SEWARD's Cleveland speech?

Mr. SHERMAN. I do not.

Mr. LETCHER. Mr. SEWARD uses the following language in another place on the same subject, and in the same speech, and I ask particular attention to the paragraph I shall now read:

"The task is as simple and easy as its consummation will be beneficent, and its rewards glorious. It requires now only this simple rule of action: To do everywhere, and on every occasion, what we can, and not to neglect to do what we can, at any time, because at that precise time and on that particular occasion we cannot do. Circumstances determine possibilities."

These men of the Republican party intend to effect some purpose. They intend to control the nation in some way. They will relieve their country of this evil (as they call it) in the best calculated, in their judgment, to accomplish that result. It is exactly with po-

itical organizations as it is with man. When he has an object to attain, he bends all energies to reach it. Mr. SEWARD again says:

"CONSTITUTIONS and laws can no more rise above the virtue of the people than the limpid stream can above its native spring. Inculcate the love of freedom and the equal rights of man under the paternal see to it that they are taught in the schools and in the churches; reform your own code, extend a c welcome to the fugitive who lays his weary limbs at your door, and defend him as you would your pa gods; correct your own error, that *slavery has any constitutional guarantee which may not be released ought not to be relinquished*. Say to slavery, when it shows its bond, [that is, the compromise of the Con tion,] and demands its pound of flesh, that if it draws one drop of blood, '*its life shall pay the forfeit*,' &c. this, and inculcate all this, in the spirit of moderation and benevolence, and not of retaliation and fanaticism, and *you will soon bring the parties of the country into an effective AGGRESSION UPON SLAVERY*. Whenever the mind shall will the abolition of slavery, the way will open for it.

"I know that you will tell me that this is all too slow. Well, then, go faster, if you can, and I will go with you."

Will gentleman tell me that language like this, uttered by a man universally admitted to be a man of very fine intellectual ability—a man who understands the force of language, perhaps, as well as any man in the country, does not warrant the charge, that the Republican party design to interfere with slavery in the States? He here indicates the plans and views which he believes his connection with the Republican party will enable him to accomplish.

But I tell gentleman that he is not the only one. There is another gentleman, holding a high place in the Republican party, who has uttered language looking to the same result. I allude to Senator WILSON, of Massachusetts. In his letter to Wendell Phillips, he says:

"I hope, my dear sir, that we shall strive to unite and combine all the friends of freedom; that we shall forget each other's faults and shortcomings in the past, and all labor to secure that co-operation by which THE SLAVE IS TO BE EMANCIPATED, and the domination of his master broken. Let us remember that more than millions of bondmen, groaning under nameless woes, demand that we shall cease to reproach each other, and we labor for THEIR deliverance."

This letter was written by Senator WILSON on the 20th June, 1855; and I call the attention of the gentleman from Ohio [Mr. SHERMAN] to the fact, that the Republican party was then born, and that Mr. WILSON was a prominent member of it. Again, in his Temple speech, delivered at Boston, he says:

"Send it abroad on the wings of the wind that I am committed, fully committed, committed to the extent, in favor of the IMMEDIATE AND UNCONDITIONAL ABOLITION OF SLAVERY, wherever it exists under the authority of the Constitution of the United States."

This speech was made in the spring of 1855, shortly before his letter to Wendell Phillips, from which I have just quoted. And I might refer to language used by others now recognized as leading men in the Republican party, who have proclaimed similar sentiments in several of the States of this Union during the late exciting contest. The language employed by them, if I can understand the force of language, points directly (if it means anything) to interference with the institution of slavery wherever that institution exists—either in the States or elsewhere.

Mr. STANTON. If the gentleman from Virginia will permit me, I desire to correct a statement made by him in regard to the Whigs in this House in 1851. The gentleman referred to the votes of the Whigs of the House upon a certain resolution introduced by a gentleman from Georgia, declaring the compromise measures of 1850 to be a finality upon the slave question. I was a member of that House, and voted against that resolution; and I desire to say what I said to members of the House then—I could not say it publicly, as the previous question having been called upon it—that I was opposed to some of the compromise measures of 1850. I was opposed to the fugitive-slave law in its details. I was opposed to giving Texas ten millions of dollars for lands to which she had just as much right as she had to so many square miles of moonshine. I believed that these measures were unadvised, but I had come to the conclusion, before the adoption of those resolutions, that it would be idle to attempt to modify or repeal them. I believed that any such attempt would result in nothing, and I had therefore determined, so far as I was concerned, to present no resolution and make no speech for reopening the slavery agitation before the country; when I was asked to vote for resolutions which required me to give security that I would not speak upon the subject, I regarded it as an insult, and I declined. I never contemplated any agitation, because I regarded it as useless. If I were called upon now to vote upon the repeal of the fugitive-slave law, I should vote for its repeal, but I shall present no resolution upon the subject. I shall make no motion in regard to it. But these resolutions were offered when there was no agitation. No resolutions had been introduced; no petitions were offered. They were a mere idle insult to those who were opposed to those compromise measures, and I therefore voted against them.

Mr. LETCHER. I recollect very well that the gentleman from Ohio was a member of

is House at that time, and voted against those resolutions, and, if I am not mistaken, the gentleman was a member of what he then called the conservative Whig party.

Mr. STANTON. I always have been.

Mr. LETCHER. To what party does the gentleman belong now?

Mr. STANTON. To the great Republican party of the Union.

Mr. LETCHER. Then the gentleman does not profess now to belong to the Whig party, and does not profess now to be a conservative man. He has gone off with a party which has renewed agitation and strife at the very commencement of this session upon the slavery question, which, with a view to this end, has disregarded the certificate of a Governor of a territory showing that Whitfield was duly elected a delegate to this House, and has undertaken to prevent him from taking his seat without even giving him an opportunity of being heard. Then, sir, conservatism is no longer a prominent feature in the ranks of the party which the gentleman now belongs. They have gone out from their old connections, and have gone into a new organization. The gentleman cannot—will not say, that the Republican party is conservative.

Mr. SHERMAN. I would like to have the gentleman give a definition of what he means by conservatism, and then I will answer for the Republican party.

Mr. LETCHER. I mean precisely what the gentleman means in the use he has made of the term. Let him define the conservatism which he, as a member of the old Whig party, maintained. I mean precisely that sort of conservatism.

And now, as the gentleman is in for asking questions, and answering none, I want to try one or two more to see whether a remnant of his conservatism yet remains. Will he be bold enough to say whether, if he were assured that a bill to abolish slavery in the District of Columbia could pass the present Congress and become a law, he would vote for it?

Mr. SHERMAN. When that question is presented I will vote upon it as I think is right.

Mr. LETCHER. It is a little remarkable that the constituents of sundry gentlemen from the North should have sent so many here who have no opinions.

Mr. SHERMAN. As the gentleman has asked me a question, I will now ask him one.

Mr. LETCHER. Yes, but you have not answered.

Mr. SHERMAN. I have answered one question by declining to answer; and I desire you to see whether the gentleman will follow my example by declining to answer one I will put to him.

Mr. LETCHER. I do not mean to be circumscribed in that way. I am perfectly willing to reciprocate; but after I have answered half a dozen of the gentleman's questions, and he uses to answer every one, it is rather too much to turn around and interrogate me. It is hardly worth while to ask him another question, but I believe I will. I was about to ask the gentleman whether he would vote to abolish slavery in the States and Territories, if he were certain that such a bill could be passed through Congress and receive the executive signature? But I suppose, as in the other case, he would have no opinion upon the subject until the question shall come up.

My friend from Ohio, in his speech the other day, called attention to an article in the Pittsburgh Post, and he read from it the following paragraph:

'But in a very short time Nebraska, Kansas, New Mexico, Utah, and Oregon will be ready for admission as free states, giving the North a preponderance it will ever retain. Nebraska will be divided into three or four States.'

While I could not see the application of that extract, the gentleman accompanied it with a remark that the Pittsburgh Post was a leading Democratic paper in Pennsylvania, that supported the election of Mr. Buchanan. I now call attention to the article from which that extract was read, for the purpose of showing what the position of this Democratic party really is upon the question of the acquisition of Cuba. This paper is dated the 27th of October last, and I quote nearly the entire article to show the opinions of the editor on the question:

'We have said that the acquisition of Cuba would reduce the price of sugar. We repeat it. Let us see to what extent this would operate. The largest amount of sugar ever produced in Louisiana in one year was three hundred and fifty thousand hogsheads. Allowing one thousand one hundred pounds to the hogshead, the total number of pounds would be, say three hundred and eighty million. The amount annually consumed in this country is estimated by good writers on the subject at seven hundred million pounds. We would buy, therefore, three hundred and twenty million pounds from other countries, mainly from Cuba. But this year it is supposed that the home product will hardly exceed one hundred thousand hogsheads, or one hundred and ten million pounds. If the consumption continues the same, we shall buy this year five hundred and ninety million pounds. But we will suppose the whole consumption for the year 1857 to be six hundred million pounds, and we buy five hundred millions of it abroad. Averaging the price of all qualities, and taking present selling prices, we may state the actual price of each pound to the consumer at twelve cents. There is a duty of thirty cent. on sugar. This adds three and a half cents to the price of each pound at the assumed rate. This would amount on all the foreign sugar bought, as above estimated, to \$17,500,000, for the year 1857. But it adds the same to the price of the home product also, and thus makes \$21,000,000 as the increased cost of the article to all actual consumers. Whether our figures are precisely correct or not, they equally well illustrate the principle.'

"Now, Cuba, Louisiana, and Texas can produce all the sugar this country will consume. If Cuba was a part of the United States, then the *home* product would supply the entire demand, and there would be no use of duty for protection at all. The duty would be taken off, and down would come the price at once to the extent above shown, thus saving to consumers, in all, from fifteen to twenty million dollars per year. If we were to pay Spain \$200,000,000, then, for Cuba, the island would pay for itself in less than fifteen years, in the single article of sugar alone."

"Now, Mr. Reporter, since you cannot refute the above view of the case, your only recourse is to call it 'guilty, pro-slavery,' &c., and try and find somebody silly enough to believe you. That is your only chance."

"Now for the slavery branch of the subject. The Reporter admits that we ought to own Cuba, and that we will have it some day. But it says that we must wait till Spain abolishes slavery in the island. When the *leopard* changes his spots Spain will do that, and not till then. Now, purchase Cuba, and make it a State of the Union, and then would follow at once an entire suppression of the slave trade to the island. The infernal trade can never exist under American law; a few fanatic dunces in the South to the contrary notwithstanding. Make Cuba a State of this Union would mitigate the evils of slavery in the island. In Cuba, as it is, slavery is a far more cruel institution than is allowed in any American State. Is it of no account to our neighbor to *mitigate* an evil, if it cannot be immediately eradicated? As to the people of the island who are not slaves, they are oppressed and plundered by a tyrannical Government. To buy the island, and make it a State of the Union, would be but to take those people from the grasp of a tyrant and *give them to themselves*. Start the principle of self-government there; let our enterprising people mingle with them and develop the vast resources of the island, thus found a great and prosperous island State."

When the gentleman brought this paper here, and read the paragraph quoted by me, I was very curious to see what was in it; and I was agreeably surprised to find such an article defending the acquisition of Cuba by the United States, and to find his positions so well sustained by argument and illustration. Is there anything in the article unsound—anything which the southern Democrats cannot endure?

Then, sir, if the Democrats of Pennsylvania are for the acquisition of Cuba when it can be properly and justly and fairly acquired, if they are willing to take it with the institution of slavery, subject it to the same control which exists over that institution in our southern country, it seems to me that there is nothing in that article which can raise a difference of opinion between the Democrats of that State and the Democrats of the South.

I should be gratified if this exciting subject never could come into this Hall, and I regret that it has been introduced here this session. But, sir, our party did not introduce it. The discussion commenced by gentleman of the Republican party in two well-considered speeches. Sentiments were avowed in those and other speeches which we were not at liberty to pass by in silence. Besides, when it is attempted to be demonstrated that the South is responsible for the introduction of this subject into the Halls of Congress—when we are held before the people of the United States as those who have introduced it, and who are seeking to keep up this agitation, it is as little as can be expected of us, that we should show where the fault lies.

In correcting the history of this agitation, it was important for us to go still further and to show that the South acted upon the defensive entirely, not only in this debate, but in the late presidential election. And when we were opposed by a party which rallied under the sectional flag, nominated a sectional candidate, and urged to secure that candidate's election by the votes of that particular section of the country in and by which he was nominated, it was for us to show that there had been nothing in the past calculated to justify the sectional organization or its fierce war upon us, and our rights and institutions; that the party was the result of principles and views which had been advanced again and again in this Hall and out of it, by those recognized as leaders; that they had given the world to understand that they were ready at the proper time, when the public mind was prepared for it, so as to render success in their opinion certain, to make an assault upon that institution wherever it was located, whether in the southern States or in the districts of counties ceded to the Federal Government for local purposes, or in the Territories.

Having done this, and having, so far as my own section is concerned, set that portion of history before the country in its true light, I express my obligation to this House for the attention which has been given to me, and yield the floor.